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ABSTRACT

The state of Washington's workforce development system agenda focused in 2002 on these four goals: (1) closing a perceived job skills gap; (2) training incumbent and dislocated workers in order to prepare them for changes in the economy; (3) achieving wage progression for low income individuals; and (4) integrating workforce development programs to improve customer service. Emphasis was on key sectors of the state economy including health care and information technology. More attention was expended on the needs of people with disabilities, people of color, women, high school graduates, and high school dropouts because it was thought that these groups will increasingly comprise the workforce of the future. Two central themes of the agenda were public partnerships with industry and customer service. (Following an introduction to the status of workforce development in Washington, including obstacles and challenges to program implementation and effectiveness, the above-named goals are presented. The majority of the document consists of lists of objectives and strategies for each goal. Throughout each section are sidebars that include best practices, case studies, and resources. Contains one figure and 76 endnotes). (AJ)

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ED 473 752

High Skills, High Wages

Washington's Strategic Plan for Workforce Development

Our Agenda for Action

2002

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Washington State
Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

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WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

The Vision

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board is Washington State's valued and trusted source of leadership for the workforce development system.

Mission Statement

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board's mission is to bring business, labor, and the public sector together to shape strategies to best meet the state and local workforce and employer needs of Washington in order to create and sustain a high-skill, high-wage economy.

To fulfill this Mission, Board members, with the support of staff, work together to:

- Advise the Governor and Legislature on workforce development policy.
- Promote an integrated system of workforce development that responds to the lifelong learning needs of the current and future workforce.
- Advocate for the nonbaccalaureate training and education needs of workers and employers.
- Facilitate innovations in workforce development policy and practices.
- Ensure system quality and accountability by evaluating results and supporting high standards and continuous improvement.

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October 2002

Dear Governor Locke and Members of the State Legislature:

We are pleased to forward to you the 2002 edition of, *High Skills, High Wages: Washington's Strategic Plan for Workforce Development—Our Agenda for Action.*

Our plan sets four goals for the state's workforce development system:

- Closing the skills gap.
- Training incumbent and dislocated workers so they are prepared for economic change.
- Achieving wage progression for low income individuals.
- Integrating workforce development programs to improve customer service.

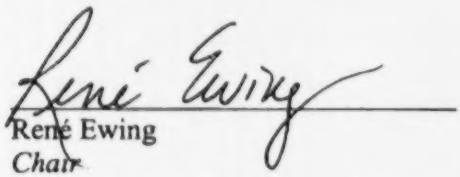
In order to achieve these four goals, our 2002 Agenda for Action includes objectives and strategies that have been updated since our 2000 Plan. The 2002 Agenda increases our focus on key sectors of the economy, such as health care and information technology. It gives more attention to the needs of people with disabilities, people of color, and women—populations that will increasingly comprise the workforce of the future. The 2002 Agenda speaks more to the needs of young people in our secondary schools and those who have dropped out of the K-12 system. Many of the strategies emphasize public partnerships with industry. Another central theme is customer service.

We know how much a family-wage job means to every adult worker. We know that young people who don't succeed in school face a steep hill to climb to economic self-sufficiency and a sense of belonging to the larger community. And we know that unprepared employees prevent our businesses from realizing their potential.

Our success will depend upon an unprecedented degree of collaboration among public agencies and institutions, local workforce development councils, private providers of training and education, community organizations, employers, students, unions, and workers. The stakes are high; the potential rewards for our state even higher.

We look forward to working with you to implement this ambitious agenda for positive change.

Sincerely,



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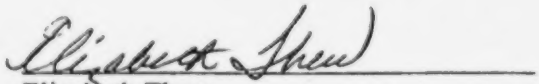

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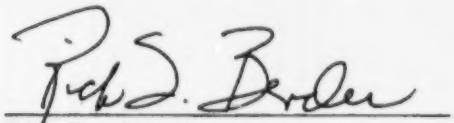

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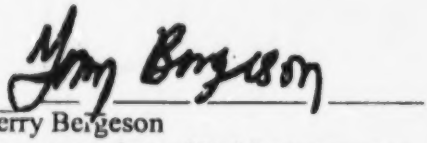

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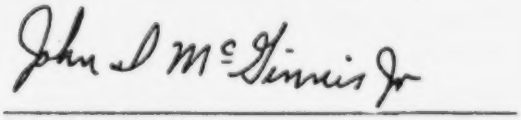

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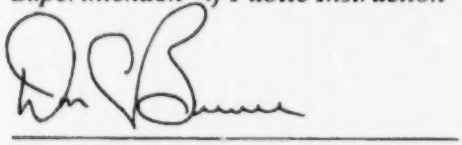

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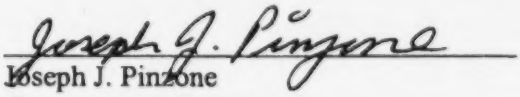

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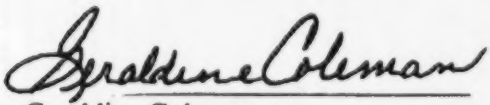

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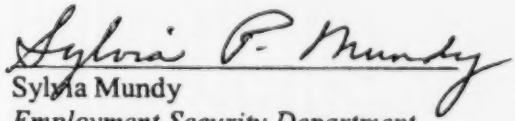

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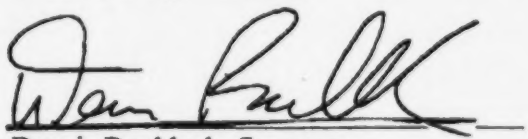

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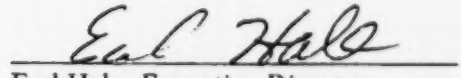

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High Skills, High Wages

Washington's Strategic Plan for Workforce Development

OUR AGENDA FOR ACTION

2002

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High Skills, High Wages

Washington's Strategic Plan for Workforce Development

OUR AGENDA FOR ACTION

Introduction

Our vision is a workforce development system that offers every Washingtonian access to high quality academic and occupational skills education throughout his or her lifetime, effective help to find work or training when unemployed, and the personalized assistance to make progress in the labor market.

To make our vision a reality we must plan our journey carefully. We must have a clear map—a set of goals, objectives, and strategies—to identify our route and guide the programs of the workforce development system to help us get there. We must have the support of our policy-makers and voters and we must be held accountable for results in making progress. Finally, we must demonstrate commitment to the journey. This plan, updated in 2002, defines the state's goals, objectives, and strategies, and measures of our success.

Challenges

The last two decades have brought about a dramatic transformation in our state's economy with profound implications for the workforce. We live in a knowledge-based economy where the main engine of economic growth is the human mind. While this economy has generated tremendous wealth, it has also sharpened economic disparities between the educated and the uneducated and between urban and rural areas. Now more than ever, enhancing the skills of our workforce is critical for ensuring a productive and secure future for all Washington residents. In an age of global competition for good jobs, the places that thrive will be the places with the best educated, most innovative, and most productive people.

Recognizing the importance of a skilled workforce, Governor Gary Locke asked the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) to address three critical challenges for the state's workforce development system.

1. Closing the gap between the need of employers for skilled workers and the supply of Washington residents prepared to meet that need.

2. Enabling workers to make smooth transitions so they may benefit fully from the new, changing economy. WTECB shall develop a coherent strategy for dislocated and incumbent worker training.

3. Assisting disadvantaged youth, persons with disabilities, new labor market entrants, recent immigrants, and low-wage workers in moving up the job ladder during their lifetimes by developing a wage progression strategy for low-income workers. Specific progress should be made in improving operating agencies and reducing the earnings gap facing people of color, people with disabilities, and women.

This plan sets forth our goals, objectives, strategies, and performance measures for meeting these three challenges. Meeting these challenges also requires addressing a fourth challenge: integrating services provided by separately-funded workforce development programs so we can provide the best possible service to our customers.

The Starting Line: What Can We Build On?

Washington already is on the way to reaching our vision.

The Washington State Employment Security Department (ESD) is engaged in a collaborative effort with other state agencies and local service deliverers to provide employment services to employers and job seekers through a one-stop WorkSource system. This system is helping us to reduce duplication and improve efficiency, maximize flexibility with limited workforce dollars, and provide more accessible

and user-friendly services. WorkSource *is* the primary portal to Washington's workforce development system. Basic employment services such as labor market information, career counseling, and job search assistance are widely available on-site at comprehensive WorkSource centers and affiliate sites and through self-service over the Internet. Beyond such basic services, WorkSource offers information about, and access to, a wide array of workforce development programs, including courses at community and technical colleges, private career schools, and other training providers. WorkSource *is* our principle approach to better coordinate employment-related services.

Beyond WorkSource, other changes, including changes in our community and technical colleges, high schools, and welfare-to-work system, are preparing the way for continued progress in other parts of our workforce development system.

- In order to coordinate workforce development policy at the local level, local elected officials established 12 workforce development councils. These councils develop local strategic plans, coordinate local workforce development activities, link initiatives with economic development strategies, oversee the local WorkSource system, collaborate in the development of WorkFirst service area plans, and identify quality improvements and expected levels of performance for programs.

- The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) is leading the development of skill standards through a collaborative process that includes employers, workers, and educators. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is establishing career and technical education program standards to incorporate workplace skills and industry-based skill standards. And, nearly all community and technical colleges are applying the tech-prep model to provide immediate college credit for career and technical courses taken by students at their high schools.

- WTECB, ESD, and SBCTC are coordinating funding to strategically target key economic sectors. A total of 17 industry skill panels have been established to analyze skill gaps and identify solutions. The funding has also enabled the creation of new college programs and customized training of workers and specific employers.

- The Legislature continues to earmark funds for the community and technical colleges and private career schools to retrain dislocated workers. Dislocated workers are able to receive additional weeks of unemployment insurance benefits while retraining. And, ESD administers a high-quality rapid response system for dislocated workers guided by labor/management committees.

- WTECB has established an on-line consumer report system at: http://www.wtb.wa.gov/etp/ and http://www.jobtrainingresults.org. The system informs consumers and staff about programs that meet performance standards and their results in placing students into jobs and what these jobs pay.

- The Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (DCTED) is working through the Business Retention and Expansion program to retain and expand manufacturing and processing firms and to reduce the number of business closures and out-of-state expansions.

- WorkFirst has implemented innovative strategies to help recipients of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) get jobs, retain jobs, and get better jobs, including Preemployment Training, Community Jobs, the Limited English Pathway, and WorkFirst Postemployment Labor Exchange.

- In January 2002, Washington began implementing *one important element of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999* that enables states to eliminate barriers to employment for people with disabilities by improving access to health care coverage available under Medicare and Medicaid. The program, Health Care for Workers with Disabilities (HWD), allows people with disabilities to work and earn up to 450 percent of the federal poverty level and still continue their Medicaid coverage, eliminating one of the most significant barriers to employment.

These are important steps forward and show clear commitment to making our vision real.

Obstacles

We recognize that we face challenges and barriers as we move toward our vision.

Changes in our population are affecting the state's workforce. A growing proportion of retirees will reduce the size of the available workforce. A growing proportion of the population will be composed of racial and ethnic minorities. Education and workforce outcomes for these populations, however, have been historically lower than those of their white counterparts. In addition, people with disabilities will increasingly comprise a larger segment of the workforce and already comprise the state's largest untapped domestic labor pool.

Too many high school students still lack motivation and support and leave school before graduating. For those who stay, it is still too likely they will graduate from high school unprepared even for entry-level work and be unaware not only of the education and skills required by today's employers, but also of the variety of employment opportunities. Many students who do not immediately move on to postsecondary education

after high school spend years drifting from dead-end job to dead-end job before linking with training at a community or technical college or private career school.

Too many participants leave training programs without a meaningful credential that can convey to employers or postsecondary education what they know and are able to do. Often students must duplicate course work they have already completed at an earlier stage in their careers because their credentials are not widely accepted.

Despite the recessionary period of 2001-2002, Washington's employers still report difficulty in finding skilled workers. Many dislocated workers cannot obtain jobs in high-demand fields because they lack the current technical skills required by business. Too often employers are forced to search in other states, or even in other countries, for technical workers they cannot find at home.

Washington's health care industry is experiencing a twofold dilemma: an acute labor shortage at the same time our population is aging and increasing demand for health services. The health care worker labor shortage is seriously jeopardizing the availability and quality of health care for the people of Washington, undermining the vitality of one of the largest industries in the state.

Skilled workers in the construction and manufacturing trades will be retiring without enough apprentices in training to fill their jobs.

Among the approximately 170,000 migrant and seasonal farm workers, the median annual income is $5,000, and the median level of educational attainment is the 8th grade.

Women remain concentrated in occupations and industries that do not provide them with sufficient compensation to support themselves and their children, if they are single parents, or offer opportunities for advancement.

People with disabilities constitute an important underused human resource. Only about half of adults with a disability in Washington are employed, and many who have jobs are not employed to their full potential.

Former public assistance recipients move into employment, but too often into low-wage jobs that allow little flexibility for balancing work, family, and training for advancement.

The State Workforce Development System

The State Workforce Development System as defined in state statute is comprised of 7 state agencies, and by Executive Order, 17 major programs (see table on page 6). For a detailed description of these programs, see the *Workforce Development Directory 2002* available at http://www.wtb.wa.gov/.

THE STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

(RCW 28C18 and E.O. 99-02)

State Board for Community and Technical Colleges	Postsecondary Technical Education Adult and Family Literacy Carl D. Perkins Postsecondary Technical Education Worker Retraining Program Volunteer Literacy Program Job Skills Program
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction	Secondary Career and Technical Education Carl D. Perkins Secondary Career and Technical Education
Employment Security Department	WIA, Title 1-B Dislocated Workers Program WIA, Title 1-B Adult Program WIA, Title I-B Youth Program Wagner-Peyser
Department of Social and Health Services	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Department of Services for the Blind	Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind
Opportunities Industrialization Center	Employment and Training for Migrant and Seasonal Workers
Department of Labor and Industries	Apprenticeship
Private Career Schools	

Other Related Programs

Other programs (23) also prepare people for employment, though they are not specified in the state statute or the Governor's Executive Order.

Washington TANF Work Program (WorkFirst)

Post Employment Labor Exchange

Community Jobs

Welfare-to-Work (federal welfare reform program through the Department of Labor)

Community and Technical Colleges
WorkFirst—customized training and basic education

Refugee Assistance Program

Juvenile Corrections Education

Food Stamp Employment and Training Program

Workers' Compensation Vocational Rehabilitation

Trade Act—Trade Adjustment Assistance Program

Washington Service Corps/AmeriCorps

Corrections Clearinghouse Program

Job Corps

Offender Education Program

Washington State Business Enterprise for the Blind

Washington Conservation Corps

Displaced Homemaker Program

Community Services Block Grant Program

On-the-Job Program

Claimant Placement

Disabled Veterans' Outreach

Local Veterans' Employment Representatives

Special Employment Services for Offenders

The Map for Progress: Goals and Objectives for Workforce Development

This plan sets forth 4 goals and 16 objectives to meet the challenges identified by the Governor. They are the goals and objectives the system will work to accomplish over the next five years.

Challenge One: Skills Gap

***Goal 1**: To close the gap between the need of the employers for skilled workers and the supply of Washington residents prepared to meet that need.*

OBJECTIVE 1.1 ► Create private-public partnerships to enable individuals to move up job and career ladders throughout their lives.

OBJECTIVE 1.2 ► Increase the number of young people who understand and act on career opportunities available through career and technical education and training programs, including youth from target populations.

OBJECTIVE 1.3 ► Expand mentor and work-based learning opportunities for all youth by working with the employer community.

OBJECTIVE 1.4 ► Increase the capacity of high schools, community and technical colleges, and apprenticeship programs to provide high-quality workforce education and training programs.

OBJECTIVE 1.5 ► Increase education and training and employment services for older workers and retired individuals who want to return to work.

Key Performance Measures

1. The number of community and technical college students, private career school students, and apprentices prepared for work compared to the number of net job openings for workers at that education level: we are meeting 78 percent of demand for newly prepared workers, up from 75 percent 2 years ago.

2. The number of industry skill panels that are established: 17 skill panels have been established during the past 2 years (none existed prior to that).

Challenge Two: Incumbent and Dislocated Worker Training

***Goal 2**: To enable workers to make smooth transitions so they and their employers may fully benefit from the new, changing economy by putting in place a coherent strategy for dislocated and incumbent worker training.*

OBJECTIVE 2.1 ► Expand customized incumbent worker training in order to increase economic competitiveness and prevent dislocation.

OBJECTIVE 2.2 ► Enhance business expansion and retention strategies.

OBJECTIVE 2.3 ► Establish a coherent, flexible, and accessible dislocated worker service strategy.

Key Performance Measures

1. The number of incumbent workers who receive publicly supported customized training linked to specific job needs of employers and the results of the training: ***2,323 incumbent workers trained, an increase of about 1,000 from 2 years ago.***

2. The ratio of dislocated workers' earnings compared to their earnings prior to dislocation (with separate targets for dislocated workers from low-wage and high-wage jobs): 94 percent earnings replacement among dislocated workers who participated in a workforce development program; 207 percent earnings replacement among dislocated workers from lower wage jobs; and 74 percent among dislocated workers from higher wage jobs (lower wage jobs are jobs with earnings in the bottom quartile, and higher wage are those in the top quartile). The earnings replacement rates two years ago were mostly the same; they were lower among workers dislocated from low-wage jobs.

3. The length of time between worker dislocation and reemployment in a suitable job: 27 months median length of dislocation among dislocated workers who participated in a workforce development program (first time measure).

Challenge Three: Wage Progression for Low-Income Workers

Goal 3: *To assist disadvantaged youth, persons with disabilities, new labor market entrants, recent immigrants, and low-wage workers to move up the job ladder during their lifetimes by developing a wage progression strategy for low-income workers. Specific progress will be made in improving operating agencies and reducing the earnings gap facing people of color, adults with disabilities, and women.*

OBJECTIVE 3.1 ▶ Increase high school graduation rates.

OBJECTIVE 3.2 ▶ Assist unemployed individuals to gain and retain employment.

OBJECTIVE 3.3 ▶ Remove barriers for populations with unique obstacles to employment, and increase the number of employers who hire individuals with disabilities, women, and people of color in high-wage, high-demand occupations.

OBJECTIVE 3.4 ▶ Assist low-income individuals to move up a career ladder by increasing training and developing career opportunities.

Key Performance Measures

1. The percentage of the entering 9th grade class of common school students who graduate from high school: 76 percent of 9th grade students graduate with their class. (No change from previous years.)

2. The percentage of low-income participants in workforce development programs whose earnings during the second year after program participation can support their family

above the poverty level. (This measure will be reported separately for women, people of color, and people with disabilities, as well as for the participant population as a whole.) Among program participants with individual earnings below the family poverty line before starting, 53 percent had individual earnings above the family poverty line during the second year after participation (50 percent for women, 48 percent for people of color, and 43 for people with disabilities.) (This is a first time measure.)

3. The median increase in earnings and hourly wages during the first three years after participation in workforce development programs. (This measure will be reported separately for women, people of color, and people with disabilities, as well as for the participant population as a whole.) Among program participants with individual earnings below the family poverty line before starting, median earnings during the third year after participation were 42 percent higher than during the first year after participation, and median hourly wages were 20 percent higher. For women, earnings were 40 percent higher, and hourly wages were 19 percent higher. For people of color, earnings were 39 percent higher, and hourly wages were 17 percent higher. For people with disabilities, earnings were 68 percent higher, and hourly wages were 18 percent higher (first time measure).

Challenge Four: Facilitate the Integration of Workforce Development Programs

Goal 4: *Integrate workforce development programs to improve customer service.*

OBJECTIVE 4.1 ▶ Improve WorkSource services to customers, including target populations by bringing together individual partner programs to craft comprehensive solutions.

OBJECTIVE 4.2 ▶ Develop and maintain service delivery capacity that is flexible and responsive.

OBJECTIVE 4.3 ▶ Reach out to individuals from target populations in order to increase their use of WorkSource services, and provide services that meet their unique needs.

OBJECTIVE 4.4 ▶ Facilitate the integration of workforce development programs that serve youth.

Key Performance Measures

1. The percentage of total employers using WorkSource: 7 percent of Washington employers used WorkSource during its first year, not counting electronic self-service (first time measure).

2. The percentage of total workers using WorkSource. (This measure will be reported separately for women, people of color, and people with disabilities, as well as for the

participant population as a whole.) Ten percent of Washington workers used WorkSource during its first year, not counting electronic services (first time measure).

3. WorkSource customer perception of seamlessness as evidenced by survey responses. (This measure will be reported separately for women, people of color, and people with disabilities, as well as for the participant population as a whole.) (Data not yet available.)

Strategies

In order to make progress on these goals and objectives, we must move forward quickly, taking meaningful steps. In the following section, we indicate the strategies we will pursue to meet the goals and objectives and explain why we must do so. We also identify which entities are responsible for leadership to implement the strategies. Finally, we set forth the key performance measures we will use to measure our progress and success.

Challenge One: Skills Gap

***Goal 1**: To close the gap between the need of the employers for skilled workers and the supply of Washington residents prepared to meet that need.*

Key Performance Measures

1. The number of community and technical college students, private career school students, and apprentices prepared for work compared to the number of net job openings for workers at that education level: we are meeting 78 percent of demand for newly prepared workers, up from 75 percent of 2 years ago.

2. The number of industry skill panels that are established: 17 skill panels have been established during the past 2 years (none existed prior to that).

The Issue for Goal 1

"Employers across the nation and within all industries share a common understanding – a qualified and well-trained workforce is perhaps the most critical factor to sustained growth and competitiveness."

– Scott Cheney, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, September 2001

Employers cannot find enough qualified job applicants to fill job openings. Even during a recession, employers still face shortages of *skilled* workers. When surveyed during the fall of 2001, 59 percent of Washington employers who attempted to hire new employees during the last 12 months had difficulty finding qualified applicants. This represents an estimated 81,000 employers. Employers reporting difficulty in finding qualified applicants was down by only 5 percentage points from the 1999 survey, which was conducted during an economic boom.

Among employers reporting difficulty, 90 percent had difficulty finding qualified job applicants with job-specific skills. For example, they wanted to hire a computer technician, a carpenter or a diesel mechanic, but they had trouble finding such applicants. Similarly, employers had a hard time finding workers with a career and technical credential. Eighty-one percent of employers who had difficulty finding qualified applicants had difficulty finding job applicants with a postsecondary career and technical diploma or certificate. An estimated 29,000 firms had difficulty finding applicants with a career and technical credential, more than had difficulty finding applicants with any other type of education.

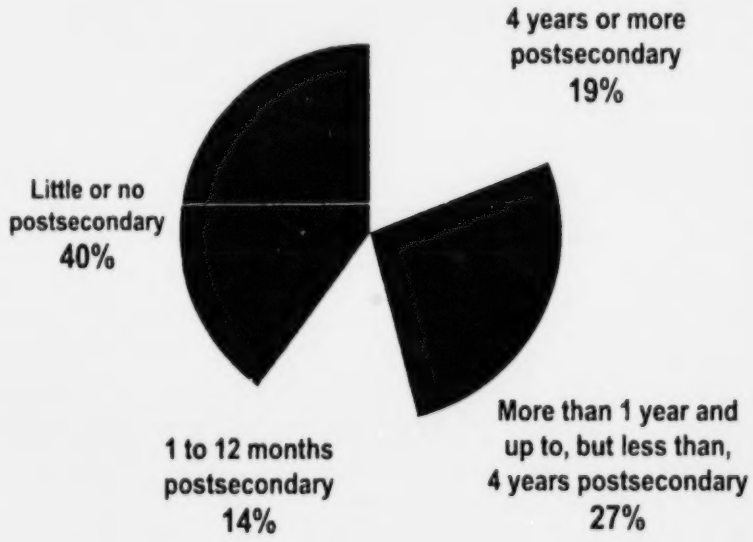
In Washington, current labor market projections indicate the greatest number of new family-wage job opportunities will be in occupations that require postsecondary education, but not a four-year degree. By 2004, there will be 35,800 job openings per year for technicians, paralegals, health care workers, salespeople, and other occupations requiring more than a year, but less than four years of postsecondary education or training (see Figure 1). Taking into account some people have more than one job, we expect that Washington's economy will need about 32,200 additional workers with this level of training. The state's 2-year colleges, private career schools, and apprenticeship programs, however, are expected to prepare only about 24,900 such new workers. These projections suggest a shortage of about 7,300 newly prepared workers in 2004.

The shortage of skilled labor has hurt Washington's economic vitality. Among employers who had trouble finding qualified applicants, 61 percent reported the difficulty resulted in lowered overall productivity. Sixty-seven percent said it reduced production output or sales, and fifty-two percent indicated it reduced product or service quality.

Developing the workforce to meet the needs of the health care industry demands particular attention. The industry is one of the largest in the state, providing over $6.2 billion in wages in 2000. This is almost twice

FIGURE 1

Training Levels Required for Expected Job Openings Between 2000 and 2008 in Washington State


4 years or more postsecondary 19%
Little or no postsecondary 40%
1 to 12 months postsecondary 14%
More than 1 year and up to, but less than, 4 years postsecondary 27%

Increasing access to postsecondary education or training has become the new threshold requirement for the competitiveness of national workforces, as well as for career success among individuals within nations.

Anthony P. Carnevale
2001

as much as agriculture, forestry, and fishing combined. Between 2002 and 2008 health care will have over 6,000 annual job openings. The state's acute care hospitals reported a shortage of 2,200 workers in 2001. Over 79 percent of hospitals reported difficulty in recruiting newly trained registered nurses during 2000 to 2001, and over 95 percent reported difficulty in hiring experienced registered nurses. The problem is compounded because people over age 65, who demand more health care services than others, represent the fastest growing portion of the population. Since health care is one of the factors businesses consider prior to locating, the shortage could deter businesses from locating and growing in Washington.

Information technology (IT) is another area with a critical shortage. Employees who design, program, and maintain computers and computerized systems are in demand both within IT and non-IT industries. According the WTECB 2001 Employer Survey, 46 percent of high-tech firms reported difficulty in finding qualified applicants. But, the problem extends beyond the IT industry itself. A vast range of industries, from agriculture to health care to government, are investing in new technologies to remain competitive, thus requiring workers who are skilled in using the new technologies.

OBJECTIVE 1.1 ▶ Create private-public partnerships to enable individuals to move up job and career ladders throughout their lives.

Strategies

1.1.1 *Form industry skill panels especially in high-demand economic clusters such as health care and information technology, to assess emerging and declining skill needs, and develop training programs.*

Lead Organization: Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Partners: Workforce Development Councils; Business Organizations; State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Labor Organizations; Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council (Department of Labor and Industries); Private Career Schools; Employment Security Department; and Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development.

Customers: Businesses, Workers, Students, and Workforce Development Providers.

In order to close the skills gap, we must have a solid foundation underlying workforce development—a basic infrastructure that can support a wide variety of industries, programs, and populations. The infrastructure must be linked to current market requirements and enable students and workers to get the skills they need when they need them. Industry skill panels comprised of employers, labor and educators, are a central vehicle for meeting this objective.

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Skill panels can directly address the skills gap by determining the skills and levels of performance required to function in specific industries and occupations (developing skill standards), identifying skills gaps in the current workforce, and helping to change curricula and assessments to match skill requirements.

ESD, SBCTC, and WTECB have collaborated to allocate funds and strategically target state resources for workforce development. By targeting and supporting key industries, the three agencies are promoting economic vitality and helping to ensure training programs meet the current and emerging needs of the businesses that will hire their graduates.

One way to identify key economic sectors is to use a cluster-based strategy. A cluster, as defined by Michael Porter is a "geo-graphic concentration of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers, firms in related industries, and association institutions. (For example, universities, standards agencies, and trade associations) in particular fields that compete but also cooperate." In other words, a cluster consists of the firms in an industry and the related firms in other industries and private and public institutions that are important suppliers, customers, or regulators of the industry. A cluster exists when there is a high concentration of such partners within a geographic region.

The competitive economic advantage of a geographic area can be found in industry clusters. The existence of an unusually high number of firms and jobs in an industry in an area is strong evidence that the area has a comparative advantage over other areas for that industry. For example, the central and southeast areas of the state have an obvious cluster in agriculture and food processing. There exists an unusually large number of employers and jobs in agriculture and food processing compared to the number of such employers and jobs in other areas of the nation, and there is a large network of related firms and institutions. These resources create an advantage compared to other geographic areas in competing in the agriculture and food processing market. The existence of a large number of firms in an industry increases the likelihood of further growth in that industry, including new spin-off businesses.

In 2000 and 2001, WTECB funded 15 local SKILLS projects to establish skill panels. At least two others have been funded by the U.S. Department of Labor. Local workforce development councils or regional consortia coordinate these projects to develop and implement strategies to close the skills gap. The industry clusters covered by SKILLS projects include biomedical, construction, health care, food processing, information technology, metals, plastics, and wood.

An example of a SKILLS project is the Northwest Alliance for Health Care Skills coordinated by the Northwest Workforce Development Council and comprised of over 20 organizations from four counties. This panel has identified five priority health care occupations, developed recruitment, training and

The nation's ability to produce high-value products and services depends on the creation and strengthening of regional clusters of industries that become hubs of innovation.

F. Duane Ackerman and Michael E. Porter for the U.S. Council on Competitiveness, 2001

retention strategies, and established a new radiologic technologist program. In another example the Inland Northwest Technology Education Center coordinated a bio-medical skills gap project in Spokane that surveyed the growing industry, developed career tracks, created skill standards, and distributed curricula to community colleges and other training providers.

1.1.2 *Provide high-quality labor market information that enables programs to respond to changes in the labor market, and inform students and customers about current career opportunities, especially in high-demand clusters such as health care and information technology.*

Lead Organization: Employment Security Department.

Partners: Skill Panels, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, and Workforce Development Councils.

Customers: Businesses, Workers, Students, Workforce Development Providers, Schools, and Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development.

ESD's Labor Market and Economic Analysis (LMEA) unit is striving to improve the quality of labor market information. LMEA staff are working with the community and technical colleges, secondary career and technical education, and workforce development councils in order to shape labor market information so that it will meet the needs of workforce development programs and participants. Program staff and students need current information on job openings and wages for their local area. The information must be in an easy-to-use format, including interfaces between labor market information and career guidance tools.

LMEA staff are also working with employers to make estimates about job openings as current and accurate as possible. Skill panels can be a rich source of labor market information needed by program managers and faculty, workers and students. Industry partnerships can identify emerging and declining skill needs. They can supply labor market information that enables college and school staff to keep offerings current with changes in the economy and information to keep students and workers aware of which skills they need to obtain and which skills soon may no longer provide a living.

1.1.3 *Develop modular curricula and assessments that are linked to industry skill standards.*

Lead Organizations: State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Partners: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Private Career Schools, and Workforce Development Councils.

Customers: Businesses, Students, Workers, Schools, and Workforce Development Providers.

Too many programs do not teach to widely recognized skill standards, nor do they offer a credential that is accepted by other programs and by employers. As a result, too many participants repeat lessons they already learned on a job or in another program or complete one program without acquiring skills required for entry into the next level of training or employment. Such inefficiencies add to the time people spend in training and out of the workforce and divert scarce resources from other areas of need. Credential portability is critical so workers can move up job ladders throughout their careers.

Apprenticeship programs have long been based on skill standards that enable workers to obtain certificates that are recognized throughout the industry and across the nation.

Industry partnerships can help educators design curricula ***geared*** to current skill standards. In order to meet the needs of students, workers, and employers curricula must increasingly be in short-term packages. This modular training must be available on an open-entry, open-exit basis so individuals can access training at the level they need when they need it. Modular training should enable individuals to advance their wages and their career plans without spending time on relearning things they already know.

Our state's community and technical college system has led the nation in the development and implementation of industry-based skill standards. Skill standards are currently under development in Washington for 25 industries with over 65 occupations represented. In addition, curriculum, assessment, and professional development projects based on skill standards are underway in post-secondary career and technical education programs and all of the 22 tech-prep consortia. Skill standards integrate foundation academic and employability (SCANS) skills, industry-specific knowledge and some job-specific skills.

At the secondary level, OSPI is establishing standards for exploratory and preparatory secondary career and technical education. OSPI is working to align these career and technical education program standards with similar standards used in the state's community and technical college system to assure a seamless articulation between secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs. This includes advanced placement opportunities, high-end IT certifications, and a connection to the critical employment and instructional needs in various occupational areas such as health services, construction, information technology, agriculture, and manufacturing. Under the draft standards, to receive supplemental funding for career and technical education, school districts would have to provide exploratory career and technical courses that require students to demonstrate workplace skills and preparatory courses ending in certificates of competency based on industry skill standards. The

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will lend its expertise in developing curricula that is accessible to learning styles and comprehension abilities of youth with various disabilities.

Continued steps are needed to make skill standards portable, applicable to more programs, and accepted and used by employers in their human resource systems. When fully implemented, skill standards will be the glue that holds the training system together.

OBJECTIVE 1.2 ▶ Increase the number of young people who understand, and act on career opportunities available through career and technical education and training programs, including youth from target populations.

Strategies

1.2.1 *Form partnerships with industries to market their career opportunities to youth and their parents.*

Lead Organization: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Partners: Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, Skill Panels, Business Organizations, Workforce Development Councils (Youth Councils), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Labor Organizations, Private Career Schools, and State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Customers: Youth and their Parents.

In order to increase student demand for the career and technical education programs that employers are demanding, and to help students achieve their dreams and ambitions, we need to increase awareness among young people and their parents of the range of postsecondary education and career options and the steps necessary to achieve their goals.

Too often students who do not immediately move on to postsecondary education after high school spend years drifting from dead-end job to dead-end job before linking with a career and technical education program.

- The average student enrolling in a community or technical college career and technical program is 29 years old.

- Only 1 percent of apprentices enter their apprenticeship directly out of high school.

More students need to understand postsecondary education has become a basic requirement for most family-wage jobs, and more students need to understand the variety of postsecondary options that lead to well-paid and rewarding careers.

There is a persistent lack of recognition among students and parents of high-wage, high-demand career opportunities that do not require a four-year baccalaureate. A four-year baccalaureate degree is not the *only* avenue to financial success and well being. Only 19 percent of the net job openings this decade will require a baccalaureate or graduate degree, while

41 percent of the openings will require some education or training beyond high school but not a baccalaureate degree (see Figure 1).

We need to engage in a high-level marketing campaign that informs students and parents of the broad range of attractive postsecondary options. Marketing will need to concentrate on good jobs in high-tech, health care construction industries, and other industries and the preparation needed to get into them. Concerned employers and workers in these critical industrial sectors will need to partner with counselors, teachers, and administrators in education and training institutions to shape a positive message to students and parents about the opportunities for a sound economic future in an enhanced program of career and technical education. Industry skill panels can be a vital player in this effort. We must take steps to increase student demand so increased postsecondary capacity in occupations in high economic demand is matched by increased student demand to enroll in these fields.

1.2.2 *Develop individual career plans for all youth to ensure awareness of links between learning and employment. Ensure all youth are aware of the range of career choices available including high-wage, high-demand occupations and nontraditional occupations.*

Lead Organizations: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and Workforce Development Councils (Youth Councils).

What Are Skills Centers?

Skills centers provide career and technical education for a cluster of school districts and are an integral part of the K-12 system. Students ages 16 to 21 in grades 11 or 12 learn job preparation skills and can take advantage of the close relationships skills centers forge with industries. For example, the New Market Skills Center in Tumwater offers computer game program design taught by the Digipen Institute in conjunction with Nintendo. It is an advanced placement program that includes math, computer science, computer programming and 3D animation. Skills centers offer education and training in a variety of occupations including healthcare occupations that are currently experiencing shortages.

Students learn basic skills, work maturity skills, and entry-level occupation competencies. They learn about career and postsecondary opportunities, participate in internships and work-based learning, develop a personal career portfolio, and participate in a wide range of leadership activities/ programs. They may also receive advanced placement or college credit through tech-prep programs.

An administrative council, comprised of the superintendents of the participating school districts, governs the skills centers. Local districts contribute to the facility and equipment acquisition, and each district has an equal vote. Washington has nine skills centers currently operating across the state.

Life plans are important for transforming ambitions from a dream to an everyday goal . . . life plans that are coherent with detail and realism are especially useful for choosing a path that increases the probability of success in adulthood. They provide adolescents with a sense of order, encourage them to engage in strategic effort, and to sustain high levels of motivation.

Barbara Schnieder, et al
The Ambitious Generation
2002

Partners: Skill Panels, Business Organizations, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Labor, Private Career Schools, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Customers: Youth and their Parents.

Washington State K-12 Learning Goal 4 states all students should "understand the importance of work and how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect future career and educational opportunities." It is essential that the K-12 system and its multiple partners continue efforts to increase the awareness among *all* students of the relationship between education and success in the world of work. This does not mean students will need to identify one career exclusively, it means students will have the opportunity to explore careers that attract them and learn early whether they are really interested or not. Offering students intensive learning experiences in career opportunities expands rather than restricts their options.

High schools around the state are reexamining how they provide career guidance and structure their curricula to prepare students for a full range of options after high school. Career guidance models are being promoted in which students are planning for education beyond high school, whether they want to go to apprenticeship, postsecondary career preparation, or baccalaureate institutions.

High schools are required to offer educational pathways for students after the Certificate of Mastery, and in order to graduate, the students of 2008 must complete a culminating project and an individual plan for their high school experience and one year beyond high school. These strategies aim to ensure students connect what they learn in high school with future education and career options.

Individual career plans should link long-term planning with short-term decisions and enable youth to identify their interests and aspirations. Students can become aware of the variety of options available and the steps necessary. When career plans include transitions to career and occupational training, incorporating appropriate career guidance tools and assessments will strengthen the effectiveness of the activity. Including resources to implement the plan, especially for target populations, will provide the means to make the plan a reality.

Individual career plans are especially important for students of color, females, and students with disabilities. While Washington State is becoming more diverse with people of color growing more rapidly than the white population, people of color have historically obtained less education on average than whites and have also experienced higher levels of unemployment. To turn these patterns around will require sustained collective and individual effort.

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Women and girls have lower average earnings than males, even after achieving the same educational credential a difference largely due to women and girls enrolling in fields of study that prepare them for lower paying occupations than the fields generally chosen by men. This finding demonstrates the special importance of creative career guidance for girls so they make the most informed choices about their futures and can take advantage of training for fields that both match their interests and are higher wage.

Only 13 percent of the participants in state-approved apprenticeship programs are women, and many apprenticeship programs have no female participants. Increased efforts in high school and postsecondary education counseling, as well as in WorkSource centers could increase awareness among women of the apprenticeship and nontraditional employment and training opportunities.

1.2.3 *Enhance educational attainment of career and technical education students with limited English proficiency.*

Lead Organization: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Partners: Workforce Development Councils (Youth Councils)

Customers: Students and their Parents.

State statutes require students with limited English proficiency (LEP) be instructed, where practicable, in their primary language while developing competence in English. Research has found long-term academic performance of LEP students is better when they have significant exposure to instruction in both English and their primary language. A study by OSPI, however, found most LEP students in the state receive little or no instruction in their primary language. The report found this is partially due to the lack of qualified teachers who can speak the primary language.

LEP students in Washington State speak a total of 181 different languages with over 62 percent speaking Spanish. Without primary language instruction, many LEP students stay in the bilingual programs for an extended period of time and have lower test scores than their English-speaking counterparts. With more than 70,000 LEP students enrolled in the K-12 transitional bilingual instruction program and an increasingly diverse population, it will be important to implement efforts that assist LEP students to achieve higher levels of educational attainment by providing more primary language instruction through qualified teachers.

OBJECTIVE 1.3 ▶ Expand mentor and work-based learning opportunities for all youth by working with the employer community.

Strategies

1.3.1 *Provide support to employers in supplying work-based learning opportunities based on individual career plans.*

Lead Organization: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Partners: Business Organizations, Skill Panels, Workforce Development Councils (Youth Councils), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Labor Organizations, and Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Customers: Businesses, Students and their Parents, and Workforce Development Programs.

Best Practice

Business-Education Partnerships

A joint resolution of the 2002 Legislature recognized the efforts of a Business Education Partnership Initiative. The Yakima Chamber of Commerce, the Yakima Valley Tech-Prep Consortium, the Yakima Area School-to-Career Partnership, Yakima Area Upper Valley Schools, and the Tri-County Workforce Development Council are among the organizations that established business-education partnerships serving Yakima's youth. Options for local businesses include job shadowing, internships, mentoring, motivational speaking, and a Teacher-Business Exchange. This comprehensive, long-term initiative has connected more than 600 businesses in promoting education efforts and is cultivating new and existing relationships. The initiative involves the community in the preparation of a quality emerging workforce, investing citizens in long-term economic development, and in long-term youth development.

More and more high schools in our state are developing the career planning skills of high school students and transforming the ways they prepare students for life after high school. As part of these changes, schools are creating new opportunities for students to learn, including contextual, applied, and work-based learning experiences. Such learning includes applied academic courses that teach subjects through application to real world situations; work-based learning through internships and co-ops, and career pathways that organize student learning through projects centered around their career goals. Evidence is mounting that such practices make education relevant and interesting and could increase graduation rates, including rates for students of color.

Experiencing several work-based learning opportunities on-site, such as job shadows and internships, helps students to appreciate working relationships, work environments, and skills required in a range of occupations. All students, including women, students of color, and students with disabilities, should be provided with on-site work-based learning opportunities that compliment their career plans. In addition to work-based experience,

classroom assignments about work-related matters such as the relationships between work and the local economy, prepare students for future work or study. According to a 2001 study by the Washington Institute for Public Policy, Washington high schools are developing activities to make learning more relevant to students, but more work is needed to ensure these activities reach *all* students. The study also found that to be more effective, these activities should be integrated into the curriculum.

Employers need support and guidance on how to supply work-based learning opportunities. Apprenticeships and apprenticeship preparation programs provide a good model for work-based learning, but are underused by youth. Employers will benefit from information and training on how to create apprenticeships and other model programs for work-based learning, and they need to be informed about Department of Labor and Industries rules for employing minors.

In order for the lead organization, OSPI, to be successful in implementing this strategy it is important that a wide range of employers in local districts are willing not only to participate but also to take a leadership role. Partner organizations such as business associations can assist in efforts to inform local employers about the need for and benefits of work-based learning, and they can help to demonstrate how to provide these opportunities. Adult students can also benefit from work-based learning opportunities in order to explore and learn about new careers. Given their majority business membership and participation, local workforce development councils are ideally positioned to assist with providing information and support to employers on work-based learning. One vehicle to achieve this is skill panels.

1.3.2 *Increase adult mentoring of youth participating in workforce development programs.*

Lead Organizations: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and Workforce Development Councils (Youth Councils).

Partners: Business and Labor Organizations and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Skill Panels.

Customers: Youth and their Parents.

Mentoring provides a foundation of support to help students focus on their education and career development. An effective adult mentor can provide emotional support, guide learning, and assist a young person to connect secondary education with future careers. This can be particularly beneficial to "at risk" students.

Successful mentoring involves a commitment of time, energy, and resources. Educators will need to partner with private industry, community organizations, and others to assist with recruiting mentors, screening for eligibility, matching students with

mentors, and monitoring the process. Seniors, who represent a growing portion of the population, can be a rich source for recruiting mentors. Again, local industry skill panels could provide a link to mentoring opportunities.

Washington has a highly qualified workforce, but to compete successfully needs greater numbers of educated workers in high-demand fields that support strategic clusters.

Washington Competitiveness Council Report, 2001

OBJECTIVE 1.4 ▶ Increase the capacity of high schools, community and technical colleges, and apprenticeship programs to provide high-quality workforce education and training programs.

Strategies

1.4.1 *Develop new programs, and increase student enrollments in workforce training, especially in high-demand industry clusters such as health care and information technology.*

Lead Organizations: State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Partners: Business and Labor Organizations, Higher Education Coordinating Board, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, and Workforce Development Councils.

Customers: Businesses and Students.

According to WTECB's 2001 Employer Survey, about 80 percent of employers attempting to hire workers with a vocational credential report difficulty finding qualified job applicants. This labor market shortage affects more firms than the shortage at any other educational level. Labor market projections show by 2004 there will be about 35,800 job openings per year for technicians, paralegals, health care workers, salespeople, and other jobs that require postsecondary education or training for more than one year, and up to, but less than four years. Taking into account workers who migrate into the state and people with more than one job, Washington's economy will need about 32,200 additional workers with this level of training each year. The state's 2-year colleges, private career schools, and apprenticeship programs, however, prepare only about 24,900 such new workers per year.

According to a report by the Northwest Policy Center at the University of Washington, job openings outstrip supply for nearly all occupational programs offered in the community and technical college system. The report notes the demand-supply gap for the better paying jobs is particularly acute.

Over the past 2 biennia, the community and technical college system (including the private colleges) has received funding to increase enrollment by 7,032 students in the 3 mission areas of vocational training, academic transfer education, and adult basic skills education. This has helped to increase the ratio of supply to demand remaining for vocationally trained workers from 75 percent to 78 percent, with a gap of 22 percent remaining. The community and technical colleges have directed much of the increased enrollment to

fields that are in high demand in the economy. Student enrollment in IT courses, for example, has increased by 14 percent between 1999-2000 and 2000-2001.

The colleges have a good record of directing growth to meet economic demand. If we are to close the skills gap, the state must fund more enrollment growth at community and technical colleges. We need to develop new programs. We also need to enhance program accessibility, for example, by greater use of infrastructure that is already in place for distance learning. In addition, there must be increased enrollment in high-demand fields in secondary career and technical education in order to start young people on career pathways in high demand fields. And while WTECB's focus is on jobs that do not require a baccalaureate degree, employers also stress the importance of targeting enrollment increases to baccalaureate and graduate programs needed for key industries. Increased funding for enrollment at community and technical colleges and four-year institutions will require action from the Governor and the Legislature.

1.4.2 *Partner with industries to provide facilities, faculty, and equipment in high-wage, high-demand fields.*

Lead Organizations: State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Partners: Business and Labor Organizations, Skill Panels, and Workforce Development Councils.

Customers: Businesses, Students, and Workforce Development Providers.

There is a wide range of capacity issues that need to be addressed in secondary and postsecondary career and technical education, especially in high-demand fields such as construction and manufacturing trades, health care, information technology, and communications. There is a shortage of facilities with up-to-date equipment and lack of adequate space for some apprenticeship programs. Colleges and schools cannot recruit and retain the number of career and technical teachers needed, particularly in high-demand fields. Schools and colleges salaries cannot compete with earnings in the private sector in information technology, construc-tion trades, and other high-demand areas, so experienced teachers leave. The state needs to explore ways to provide sufficient compensation to attract and retain qualified faculty in high-demand fields.

One place to turn to increase capacity is strong private-public partnerships. Businesses have facilities, computers, other equipment, and expert personnel to enhance the public resource base. Given constraints on public budgets, public programs need to seek out employers who can help to increase capacity to meet labor market demand. In addition,

program facilities should not lie idle when they could be put to use by other programs. Facilities should be shared between programs as appropriate. For example, other programs could use apprenticeship training sites during the day since most of apprenticeship training occurs after work hours.

Best Practice

Career and Technical Education

The Pierce County Careers Consortium was one of the workforce development programs recognized for best practice at the 2001 Workforce Leadership Conference. The Consortium is comprised of 14 school districts, 5 community and technical colleges, and representatives from business, labor, and community-based organizations. The Consortium is focused on preparing students to enter the workforce with high-wage, high-demand skills and ensure they also have the knowledge to continue lifelong learning and take advantage of new career opportunities. Ten countywide committees have integrated industry skill standards into courses and created portfolio guidelines that complement five career pathways at the secondary level. An individualized planning program that increases parental involvement has decreased dropout rates.

The Consortium's dual credit program allows students to receive both high school and college credit and progress more quickly in their postsecondary programs because they do not have to complete redundant course work. More than 9,600 college credits have been awarded through the dual credit program. One of the dual credit articulation agreements creates a seamless pathway from high school to college to the information technology programming degree program at University of Washington, in Tacoma. In addition, the Consortium has expanded apprenticeship programs, facilitated joint marketing of programs, and provided community mentoring for "at-risk" youth.

1.4.3 *Expand the ability of higher education institutions to recognize and grant credit for competencies obtained through other educational institutions and employment.*

Lead Organizations: Higher Education Coordinating Board and State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Partners: Four-Year Colleges and Universities, Private Career Schools, and Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Customers: Students and Businesses.

Many incumbent workers who find they must gain more education to move up a career ladder would benefit from expanded efforts to establish competency-based curricula and assessments. These could provide a vehicle for granting credit based on prior education or skills learned on the job. In the long-term, a competency-based system would facilitate transfer, though it will require a considerable shift from current practices. A first step is to facilitate transfer between two-year and four-year institutions by creating additional statewide degree agreements between two-year and four-year institutions.

About one third of students who graduate with a degree from a four-year institution have transferred from a community or technical college. About half of transfer students have an associates degree from

a community or technical college and take advantage of statewide articulated degrees. The most widely used statewide articulated degree is the associate of arts Direct Transfer Agreement (DTA). In 2000, the associate of science direct transfer degree was offered for the first time.

Although Washington has developed an articulation system for recognizing most course work, many students attending two-year colleges could benefit from additional statewide articulation agreements. Each year about half of the students who transfer (6,000) have not completed associate degrees, and four-year institutions evaluate each course taken for its transferability. Students may take courses at a two-year institution with the aim of completing a four-year degree at a particular four-year institution. Since many of the programs are competitive, students may not obtain a place at their first choice, four-year institution. And, even after acceptance into a four-year school, students may find they have to complete additional classes (i.e., prerequisites) to be accepted into their chosen major. This can significantly add to costs and time to completion. Additional statewide degree agreements would establish common requirements, helping to ensure students take the necessary prerequisites at two-year institutions and are prepared for completing a major at more than one four-year institution.

In the short term, improved access to information about course requirements for various baccalaureate majors, community and technical college course options and offerings, and the transfer process could ease transitions for students. This information can be provided in a number of ways such as improved electronic access to centrally provided information services.

A small number of students (about 250 per year) transfer from two-year to four-year institutions with technical credits based on individual articulation agreements. These are concentrated in particular programs (such as associate degree registered nurse), which can articulate with a bachelors of science in registered nursing. Some states have statewide articulation agreements in specific fields. For example, Florida has statewide articulations agreements in nursing, electronics engineering technology, hospitality, and radiography. In Washington, only about 5 percent of students with workforce degrees transfer. Additional opportunities should be developed for students with workforce credits and degrees to continue their education to earn baccalaureate and advanced degrees.

Another transfer barrier exists between private career schools and public community and technical colleges. Students attending private career schools trying to enter the public system find they may have to duplicate course work because the receiving community or technical college only accepts credits from regionally accredited schools, and most private career schools are nationally accredited. Private career and technical schools must be part of the discussion on articulation and transfer arrangements to ensure the state policy support all students as they continue their education.

There are plenty of examples of students who have successfully made it through the higher education system. But, too many have not; too many have taken longer than they should have at no fault of their own. If the education system were better aligned and supportive, we could expect success for all students.

Governor Gary Locke
P-16 Roundtable, 2001

In 2001, the Higher Education Coordinating Board convened the Transfer and Articulation Policy and Practices Action Group comprised of representatives of public universities and colleges, independent institutions, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Inter-Colleges Relations Committee. The group is reviewing state transfer and articulation laws, policies and practices, and options for improving transfer and articulation arrangements.

Finally, improving and expanding the pathways for students to continue their education at the baccalaureate and advanced levels assumes that space will be available in the four-year institutions to accommodate the additional students from articulated programs. Policymakers and college and university administrators will need to make policy and budget decisions to ensure adequate space in high-demand programs.

1.4.4 *Increase availability of applied degrees especially in science technology, engineering technology, and information technology.*

Lead Organizations: Higher Education Coordinating Board and State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Partners: Four-Year Colleges and Universities.

Customers: Students and Businesses.

Many students who complete associates degrees in technical fields study in an applied context and carry applied credits from technical programs but may not be able to use these credits for transfer purposes to complete a four-year degree. By offering baccalaureate level applied degrees, four-year institutions could recognize and grant credit for courses with an applied focus, and this would allow students to obtain additional qualifications when needed. In the same way Washington State provides clear pathways for associate of arts to bachelor of arts and now associate of science to bachelor of science, a similar pathway could be established for associate of applied science to a bachelor of applied science.

Employers have stressed their need for skilled workers in technical fields, including workers who have one or two years of education or training beyond a two-year program. A study by the Northwest Policy Center asked a diverse range of employers in four communities in the state what they are looking for in entry-level IT employees and about the preparedness of entry-level applicants for IT positions. The report concluded employers "need IT workers with a combination of the skills no higher education program currently offers," and these include practical, hands-on skills, a broad range of problem solving, communication and organizational culture skills, and opportunities for work experience to supplement their classroom education. Applied degrees would provide the range of skills many employers are seeking.

At least 15 other states are offering applied degree options. For example Arizona State University offers a bachelor's of applied science with concentrations in aviation maintenance management technology, semiconductor technology, and software technology applications to name a few. Other applied degree titles include bachelor of technology in computing science, bachelor of applied sciences in technology, and bachelor of applied technical science.

In our state, Eastern Washington University offers applied technology degrees on its main campus and at some community and technical college campuses. Central Washington University is planning a bachelor of science in applied science—information technology. A few other applied degree offerings are available such as Evergreen State College's "upside down" degree, and Seattle Pacific University's Professional studies degree in organizational behavior, electrical engineering and computer science. Bellevue Community College is also exploring applied degree offerings. State policymakers should pursue options for making applied degrees more widely available.

1.4.5 *Expand apprenticeship training in emerging fields, and expand preparation programs for apprenticeship in high-demand clusters including construction.*

Lead Organizations: Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council at the Department of Labor and Industries.

Partners: Joint Apprenticeship Committees, Labor Organizations, Business Organizations, Employment Security Department, Private Career Schools, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, Workforce Development Councils, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Skill Panels.

Customers: Students, Workers, and Businesses.

The scarcity of highly skilled workers is not confined to high-tech industries. The construction industry is having serious difficulty recruiting workers. Forty-six percent of construction firms that tried to hire workers during the past year reported difficulty finding qualified job applicants. The average age of workers in many construction trades is about 50, and the average entering age is near 30. Workers are retiring without young apprentices being trained to replace them.

Apprenticeship programs are not limited to the construction trades. Apprenticeship training, including earning while learning and instruction by a skilled mentor, could be expanded to many high-demand occupations, including health care. The Office of Apprenticeship Training and Employer Labor Services at the U.S. Department of Labor is encouraging the expansion of apprenticeships to address skill needs in occupations not traditionally apprenticed.

Preparation programs prepare individuals to enter registered apprenticeship programs or gain employment in supportive roles in industries that use apprenticeship. In Washington such programs are small and can serve a relatively small number of participants. They operate in an uncertain funding environment, and, as a result, programs move in and out of operation every year. Much of the funding is categorical, targeting specific population groups, which reduces program flexibility, as well as the ability to get to a scale that can address the skills gap meaningfully. SBCTC and community-based organizations could provide these types of programs and expand access to a wider population than are currently served. For example, dislocated workers, incumbent workers, and individuals lacking English language proficiency could benefit from these opportunities.

1.4.6 *Increase the number of individuals prepared to teach students for high-wage, high-demand fields.*

Lead Organizations: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Partners: Four-year colleges and universities, Business and Labor Organizations, Higher Education Coordinating Board, and Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Customers: Students and Workforce Development Providers.

Education and training institutions have difficulty attracting and retaining high-quality faculty to teach in high-wage, high-demand fields because of the opportunities available outside teaching. In the high-demand field of health care, for example, one of the major problems for community colleges is instructors must have a masters qualification, and masters qualified health care personnel can earn more outside teaching. With limited state funding for salaries, community colleges and high schools will need to find ways of attracting and retaining teachers.

Recognizing that high schools compete with industry to recruit teachers in specialized fields, the 2001 Legislature adopted criteria for three alternative routes to certification designed for degreed professionals such as engineers or mathematicians interested in a career change and for current district employees who are classified instructional staff. The Professional Educator Standards Board awarded $2 million in grants to school districts partnered with teacher preparation programs to pilot new routes to teacher certification with first round applications commencing in spring 2002. Another option for overcoming this obstacle is for educational institutions to partner with employers so employees are released to teach part-time.

The teacher shortage issue must be addressed by a variety of institutions and stakeholders that extend beyond the workforce development system. Workforce development partners, however, must do their part to solve the problem.

1.4.7 *Highlight and replicate best practices from around the state and nation in career and technical education.*

Lead Organizations: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Partner: Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Customers: Educators and Students.

Workforce development partners should draw on the experiences of initiatives with proven success. By studying the best practices occurring around the state, nation, and globe, workforce development program staff can reproduce some elements while adjusting others to suit local requirements.

OBJECTIVE 1.5 ▶ Increase education and training for older workers and retired individuals who want to return to work.

Strategy

1.5.1 *Encourage older workers and retired individuals who want to return to work to pursue education and specialized training, and improve access for seniors to take advantage of these opportunities.*

Lead Organization: Aging and Long-Term Care Services

Partners: Business and Labor Organizations, Employment Security Department, Skill Panels, Workforce Development Councils, and State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Customers: Older Workers and Retirees who want to return to work and business.

Older workers and retirees need access to education and specialized training to both mitigate the shortage of skilled workers in the state's economy and improve their prospects for retaining or obtaining employment. People over the age of 65 constitute the fastest growing segment of the population. Following the national trend, Washington had 662,000 people age 65 and older in 2000, accounting for roughly 11 percent of the population. Recent forecasts suggest this number will reach 1.22 million or 16 percent of the population, by 2020. In addition to there being more retirees, the age composition of those remaining in the workforce will shift. The number of older workers in the state will rise dramatically; 1 out of every 5 workers will be 55 or older by 2025, as opposed to roughly 1 in 10 in 2000. In addition to older workers delaying retirement, some retirees will either want to return to work or will need to return to work to supplement their income.

The Committee on Economic Development has stated that older workers themselves must acquire and maintain skills and employers should recognize the value of training their older workers and ensure equal access

to training for them. In addition, the report recommends that higher education and other training institutions recognize the need for work-oriented learning among older Americans and expand their offerings to a largely untapped customer market. The need for training in technology, literacy, and customer service were identified as the three most critical issues facing older workers at a 1999 conference of the National Association of Older Worker Employment Services. Other barriers include limited English proficiency and isolation in rural areas.

The Senior Community Service Employment Program, funded under Title V of the federal Older Americans Act, serves persons with low incomes who are 55 years or older, and who have poor employment prospects. The program aims to both provide useful community services and foster individual economic self-sufficiency by providing education and training and placement in unsubsidized jobs. National program statistics show high participation rates among women (nearly three out of four participants) and African Americans and Hispanics. There are long waiting lists for participants and host agencies in Washington. This program fulfills only a fraction of the demand for such services. WorkSource centers and partners could increase awareness among frontline staff of the training needs of older workers and individuals wishing to return to work. In addition employers should be encouraged to recognize the positive attributes of older workers such as their industry-specific skills, work ethic, and general knowledge and experience.

Challenge Two: Incumbent and Dislocated Workers

***Goal 2**: To enable workers to make smooth transitions so they and their employers may fully benefit from the new, changing economy by putting in place a coherent strategy for dislocated and incumbent worker training.*

Key Performance Measures

1. The number of incumbent workers who receive publicly supported customized training linked to specific job needs of employers and the results of the training: 2,323 incumbent workers trained, an increase of about 1,000 from 2 years ago.

2. The ratio of dislocated workers' earnings compared to their earnings prior to dislocation (with separate targets for dislocated workers from low-wage and high-wage jobs): 94 percent earnings replacement among dislocated workers who participated in a workforce development program; 207 percent earnings replacement among dislocated workers from lower wage jobs; and 74 percent among dislocated workers from higher wage jobs (lower wage jobs are jobs with earnings in the bottom quartile, and higher wage are those in the top quartile). The earnings replacement rates two years ago were mostly the same; they were lower among workers dislocated from low-wage jobs.

3. The length of time between worker dislocation and reemployment in a suitable job: 27 months median length

of dislocation among dislocated workers that participated in a workforce development program (first time measure).

The Issue for Goal 2

Incumbent and dislocated worker training is part of a continuum of workforce development. By enhancing the skills of workers who are currently employed, we can enable them and their employers to be more competitive, and we can sometimes prevent dislocations.

One of the most effective ways to increase the competitiveness of employers is to provide training customized to the specific needs of employers. Because such training is designed to meet specific employer needs, it increases the training's efficiency and effectiveness. Unfortunately, Washington ranks near the bottom in per capita expenditures among the 47 states with job-linked customized training. According to a 1998 National Governors Association survey (the most recent national data), states spend over $575 million per year on job-linked training. Washington was last among the 47 states that support this type of training, investing only $558,000 per year in state dollars. Since that time, Washington has not increased the amount of state general fund dollars invested in customized occupational skills training.

If we are successful in upgrading the skills of incumbent workers, we will have gone a long way to prevent worker dislocation. But, worker dislocations will not disappear. Many workers will still lose jobs and experience difficulty in finding new employment at similar wages because they lack the latest skills desired by growing businesses. While employment in Washington increased dramatically between 1996 and 2000, the number of dislocated workers also increased. The churning of jobs and skills is an inherent feature of a modern growing economy. In 2001, the nation entered a recession and Washington's unemployment rate became the highest in the United States. We are experiencing increasing worker dislocations as well.

Dislocated workers (individuals terminated or laid off who are unlikely to return to employment in their previous industry because of diminishing demand for their skills) typically suffer severe negative impacts. A study of worker dislocation conducted for WTECB found Washington workers who are dislocated experience a permanent loss of 15 percent of their earnings compared to similar workers who are not dislocated.

The extent of earnings loss relates directly to how long dislocated workers were with their previous employer. Long-tenured workers are more likely to experience longer spells of unemployment, and their new jobs are likely to pay substantially less than their old jobs. For each year of service, earnings losses rise at a rate of between 1 and 2 percentage points. Workers who have held their job for less than a year typically regain their previous earning level, while workers who had been on their job for 20 years typically suffer a 20 to 40 percent permanent decline in earnings.

OBJECTIVE 2.1 ▶ Increase economic competitiveness and prevent dislocation by expanding customized incumbent worker training.

Strategies

2.1.1 *Increase publicly supported customized incumbent worker training, and provide incentives to both employers and employees for this type of training.*

Lead Organization: Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Partners: Employment Security Department, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Business Organizations, Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development, Labor Organizations, Private Career Schools, Skill Panels, and Workforce Development Councils.

Customers: Businesses and Workers.

Little of Washington's small pot of customized training dollars is spent on upgrading skills of incumbent workers. The only state program to defray the cost of upgrading *occupational* skills of current workers is the Job Skills Program (JSP) administered by SBCTC. Employers must provide a dollar-for-dollar match for the public funds. JSP can also provide training for prospective employees before a new plant opens or when an existing firm expands. In comparison, other states spend an average of 52 percent of their customized training funds on incumbent workers.

The Governor proposed, but the Legislature did not fund, expansion of JSP in the 2001-03 biennial budget. The biennial budget for JSP is $1.1 million. This amount is far below that spent by other states our size. Iowa, with the largest program on a per capita basis, expended $46 million in 1997. In 2001, the Washington Competitiveness Council recommended the capacity of JSP be increased.

In order to increase funding for customized occupational training, the state is turning to federal funds. The Governor is directing that a portion of the state set-aside for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) be spent for this purpose. Using WIA funds, ESD has created the Industries of the Future Skills Training program to provide customized training for workers. State agencies and local workforce development councils are also aggressively seeking other federal grants as they become available.

Besides JSP, there are other public funds directed to job-linked customized training. The community and technical colleges' Preemployment Program under WorkFirst also provides customized training linked to specific job openings. This program, however, does not offer any training to incumbent workers. The colleges' Workplace Basic Skills program, also part of WorkFirst, provides customized literacy education for incumbent workers.

Most national estimates show that employers invest between 1 and 2 percent of payroll on employee training. According to a survey conducted by the American Society for Training and Development, total training expenditure per employee rose from $499 in 1996 to $649 in 2000.

As Jerry Jasinowski, the President of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), stated:

> *"For the United States to maintain its strong leadership position in a growing economy, industry must make greater efforts to prepare workers for the increasing challenges of the high-tech era. This may even require them to substantially increase the percentage of payroll that they currently invest in those activities."*

NAM's board of directors have called on all 14,300 member companies to invest 3 percent of payroll on training. Studies have found that investments in employee training pay off in terms of increased productivity and profits. According to a 1995 study by the University of Pennsylvania, investing in the skills of workers has more than twice the impact on productivity as investing in equipment or facilities.

In 2001, Washington obtained a U.S. Department of Labor two-year *Incumbent Workers Skill Shortage Demonstration Grant* that is targeted towards migrant and seasonal farm workers. This grant provides for development of an in-house training program at one of the major food processing companies that is both employer and employee specific. Training curriculum was developed through task-force participation and partnership with local workforce development councils and area colleges. The program aims to enhance job retention and promotion for migrant and seasonal farm workers within the company and yield a 2 percent increase in productivity at the same time.

Best Practice

Skilled Training for Incumbent Workers

Recognizing workers in the food industry need a career path designed for continuous learning, the Eastern Washington Agriculture and Food Processing Partnership established the Skilled Training for Incumbent Workers program. In a time of rapidly changing technology, this program meets the critical upgrade training needs established by employers to either keep pace with existing jobs or provide additional training for immediate or potential promotion. The program uses state funds administered by the Tri-Valley Workforce Development Council through the Employment Security Department, requires private industry matching funds and is integrated with a federal Department of Labor Systems Building demonstration project.

The aim of the program is to train workers for both individual career success and build strong rural economies. Current workers are trained in a wide variety of courses, including ammonia refrigeration, motor controls, basic skills, electronics, and programmable logic controllers.
A sample of workers who completed a programmable logic control course showed an average of $587 wage increase per trainee in 3 to 4 months after the training. The program began training incumbent workers in January 2001, and by June 2002, it is anticipated that at least 750 incumbent workers will be trained at plant sites (more than 70) in addition to courses located at public and private educational institutions.

The colleges also contract with employers to provide customized training, often for incumbent workers, for a fee. According to WTECB's 2001 survey of employers, in the last 12 months, 26 percent of employers have hired new employees who were trained in community and technical college programs, and 13 percent of Washington businesses have an arrangement with a community or technical college to provide classroom training to their current workers. Except for the few firms supported through JSP, this was contracted training paid for entirely by the firm, not supported by state dollars. According to the survey results, almost 80 percent of firms who use a community or technical college to train their current workers report they are satisfied with the training their employees receive.

OBJECTIVE 2.2 ▶ Enhance business expansion and retention strategies.

Strategies

2.2.1 *Market retention services to at-risk businesses and their workers.*

Lead Organizations: Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development and Employment Security Department.

Partners: Business and Labor Organizations and Workforce Development Councils.

Customers: Businesses and Workers.

The Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development's Business Retention and Expansion program works to retain and expand manufacturing and processing firms and to reduce the number of business closures, failures, and out-of-state expansions that could result in significant loss of jobs. The program identifies threatened manufacturing and processing companies and provides problem solving and technical assistance to the firms. The program uses early warning/business surveys, keeps abreast of industry developments, and helps build the capacity of local economic development councils. The program also focuses on business retention in rural counties. Participating counties identify their significant businesses and industries. A community taskforce develops a plan to address barriers identified by local business.

Washington State's investment in business retention and expansion services is significantly less than the majority of states. We need to expand services to other industries in the state beyond manufacturing and processing. We also need to link these services with efforts to develop and upgrade worker's skills and rapid response services to firms announcing impending layoffs. Again, private-public partnerships, discussed under Goal One, could facilitate the state's business retention and expansion services and help with the linkages to workforce development.

OBJECTIVE 2.3 ▶ Return unemployed workers to suitable work in as short a time as possible.

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Strategies

2.3.1 *Establish a coherent, flexible, and accessible dislocated worker service strategy, and continue best practices such as rapid response labor-management committees.*

Lead Organizations: Employment Security Department and Workforce Development Councils.

Partners: Business Organizations, Labor Organizations, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Customers: Workers and Businesses.

To effect a coherent policy for serving dislocated workers, all state and federally funded programs that serve dislocated workers will implement consistently the general principles listed across the state.

The major federal program for dislocated workers, Title III of the Job Training Partnership Act, became part of WIA, Title I-B, on July 1, 2000. Washington frequently uses these federal funds in tandem with the state's Worker Retraining program. State dollars pay the state's portion of the cost of the actual skills training and related support services (e.g., child care), while the federal dollars pay for tuition and other services. Federally funded services include rapid response services to employers and workers, providing

General Principles for Serving Dislocated Workers

1. Prevention is the best strategy. The state's first priority is to attempt to prevent worker dislocations from occurring. Examples of specific prevention strategies include incumbent worker training and business and job retention assistance.

2. When dislocation cannot be prevented, the state will mobilize resources as quickly as possible. The state's response will be coordinated, involve labor and management, and will be based upon best practices.

3. Frontline staff, including staff at WorkSource centers, will provide knowledgeable and courteous services to dislocated workers. Frontline staff will be familiar with the full range of state and federal dislocated worker program options and resources and will immediately link workers with sources for further information.

4. The state will offer the highest quality labor market information, consumer reports on training providers, and other career planning information.

5. The state will use comprehensive assessments to quickly identify dislocated workers who may require intensive or training services in order to be successfully reemployed in suitable employment.

6. The state will offer dislocated workers high-quality retraining in skills in high demand. The retraining will be accessible, timely, and based on industry standards.

7. Employment and education staff will collaborate in developing individual training plans.

8. The state will offer public financial assistance to help cover the living expenses of dislocated workers while they are in retraining, subject to funding and statutory restrictions.

9. Programs will be complementary, flexible, and consistent—avoiding contradictory rules, definitions, and practices.

assistance as soon as pending layoffs are known. Best practices include prefeasibility studies of options other than closures and layoffs and the establishment of labor-management committees that bring together the resources and perspectives of both parties to planning, oversight, and problem solving. Peers can bring special knowledge and better rapport to dislocated worker counseling. For workers who become dislocated due to plant closings, the Employment Security Department and the Workforce Development Council deliver on-site reemployment services. Federally funded services also include job search assistance such as career counseling, classes on resume writing and job interviews, and referrals to job openings.

Dislocated worker programs should: help the participants develop individualized training plans; make sure they know the skills they have and the skills they need; provide job readiness or skills training that corresponds to real job prospects; integrate basic skills training with occupational training; and provide upgrade and retraining in high-wage, high-demand skills and occupations.

A Checklist for Union Leaders: Helping Government Help Dislocated Workers Working for America Institute, AFL-CIO

While we are working to upgrade the skills of incumbent workers and enhance the competitiveness of firms within critical industries, we must pay attention to businesses that are at risk of closure.

For the purpose of enhancing the early warning system, ESD has developed a weekly early warning "red flag" report to share information with key state and local leaders on potential and actual worker dislocations that may result from high energy costs and/or drought. The "red flag" report focuses on energy- and water-dependent industries of aluminum, agriculture, food processing, pulp and paper, lumber, aerospace, and chemical and petroleum refining.

2.3.2 *Provide retraining in high-demand fields.*

Lead Organization: State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Partners: Employment Security Department, Private Career Schools, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, and Workforce Development Councils.

Customers: Businesses, Workers.

The state has continued its investment in dislocated worker training ($64.122 million for fiscal years 2002 and 2003) through the Worker Retraining program at community and technical colleges and private career schools. The colleges and schools provide training in basic skills and literacy, career and technical education, and related or supplemental instruction for apprentices.

Students who qualify for the program may receive financial assistance that can help with tuition, as well as offset the costs of child care, and transportation. The 2000 Legislature enacted the Training Benefits program that offers dislocated workers unemployment insurance benefits for up to 74 weeks (depending on their industry) while they are in retraining. Forty million dollars in additional benefits are available per biennium after July 1, 2002.

The WTECB study found retraining can have a substantial positive impact on worker earnings, but this impact depends

on the type of training. Training for high-wage fields increases worker earnings (by an average of $3,200 per year), while training for low-wage fields typically has a negative impact on earnings. That is, if training is in low-wage fields, dislocated workers are better off seeking immediate employment. Time spent in training is time spent out of the laborforce where skills and experience can be gained on the job. To increase the net benefit of retraining, training should be in high-wage fields and be provided in as short a time as possible, while still preparing workers with the skills necessary for their new careers. There must be better career counseling prior to enrollment in training so dislocated workers can make choices that will sustain their level of earnings.

Challenge Three: Wage Progression for Low-Income Workers

Goal 3: *To assist disadvantaged youth, persons with disabilities, new labor market entrants, recent immigrants, and other low-wage workers to move up the job ladder during their lifetimes by developing a wage progression strategy for low-income workers. Specific progress will be made in improving operating agencies and reducing the earnings gap facing people of color, people with disabilities, and women.*

Key Performance Measures

1. The percentage of the entering 9th grade class of common school students who graduate from high school: 76 percent of 9th grade students graduate with their class (no change from previous years).

2. The percentage of participants in workforce development programs whose earnings during the second year after program participation can support their family above the poverty level. (This measure will be reported separately for women, people of color, and people with disabilities, and the participant population as a whole.) Among program participants with individual earnings below the family poverty line before starting, 53 percent had individual earnings above the family poverty line during the second year after participation (50 percent for women, 48 percent for people of color, and 43 for people with disabilities). (This is a first time measure).

3. The median increase in earnings and hourly wages during the first three years after participation in workforce development programs. (This measure will be reported separately for women, people of color, and people with disabilities, as well as for the participant population as a whole.) Among program participants with individual earnings below the family poverty line before starting, median earnings during the 3rd year after participation were 42 percent higher than during the first year after participation, and median hourly wages were 20 percent higher. For women, earnings were 40 percent higher, and hourly wages were 19 percent higher. For people of color, earnings were 39 percent

higher, and hourly wages were 17 percent higher. For people with disabilities, earnings were 68 percent higher, and hourly wages were 18 percent higher (first time measure).

The Issue for Goal 3

In designing strategies to help low-income workers and youth experience wage progression (increases in wages and earnings over time), we must take into account the different populations we are serving. Certain subpopulations are overrepresented among the economically disadvantaged: people with disabilities, people of color, and women.

According to the 2000 Washington Population Survey, there were 587,000 adults (14 percent of Washington adults) age 21 or older with household incomes at or below 175 percent of the poverty line. Many of the economically disadvantaged, 59 percent, were employed but in low-paying jobs. Improving the earning potential of this group will not only increase their standard of living, but also improve the economic prosperity of the whole state.

While the rate of Washington's population growth is slowing overall, *26 percent* of the net additions to Washington's workforce (people entering minus people leaving) from 1990 to 2020 is expected to be people of color. The Hispanic population more than doubled during 10 years, reaching over 440,000 in 2000. For a variety of reasons, including racial prejudice, people of color have obtained less education on average than whites and have traditionally experienced higher levels of unemployment. The percentage of people of color who are disadvantaged is nearly double the percentage in the whole population.

People with disabilities represent another underutilized human resource. Approximately 138,000 youth and 557,000 adults have work-limiting disabilities. And, according to a 1996 survey of 2,500 Washington citizens with disabilities, many feel their skills are unused or underused. Only 38 percent of people with disabilities have full- or part-time jobs. Of the people employed part-time, nearly half say they want full-time work. About one-third of those employed say their jobs do not use their skills well.

Women who are single parents and their children also often face economic hardships. Eighty percent of all adults receiving TANF are women. To the extent women remain concentrated in occupations and industries that do not provide them with compensation sufficient to support themselves and their children or offer opportunities for advancement, these families will continue to remain within the boundaries of poverty. Women, however, tend to enter fields of study for occupations that pay less than the fields dominated by men.

For adults who are unemployed, we must apply strategies to help them get employed and to enable them to stay employed because we know continuous employment is usually accompanied by steadily rising wages.

For low-income individuals, we know occupational skills training increases wage progression beyond the level achieved by continuous employment alone. We must overcome financial, logistical, and access barriers that prevent disadvantaged people, including the working poor, from obtaining occupational skills training.

OBJECTIVE 3.1 ▶ Increase high school graduation rates.

Strategies

3.1.1 *Ensure all youth achieve the necessary core skills as established by industries in their chosen career pathway, including the achievement of the high school diploma or entrance into a postsecondary education or training program.*

Lead Organization: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Partners: Business and Labor Organizations, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Workforce Development Councils, and State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Customers: Students and Businesses.

Too many young people never complete high school. Approximately three-quarters of youth under age 19 graduate "on time" and these percentages have remained constant for 35 years. Too many young people who want work are not prepared to find it. The 1999 unemployment rate for 16- to 19-year-olds was 18.6 percent compared to the overall state rate of 5.2 percent.

Summer Initiatives That Integrate Employment and Education

Northwest Workforce Development Council Initiatives

In a summer youth internship program offered in Whatcom, Skagit, Island, and San Juan counties, students earn academic credit towards their high school diploma. Offered by the Northwest Workforce Development Council in partnership with school districts, local employers and community-based groups, the program targets students who are credit deficient and at risk of dropping out, or who have already dropped out. During 2001, 150 students participated, receiving academic enrichment, both in the classroom and at the worksites, and "workplace know-how" based on essential workplace skills in demand by employers. Participants draw connections between work and learning and create portfolios describing the skills and experience learned through their summer employment experience. The portfolios are designed to present to high school teachers to obtain credit and to future employers as a demonstration of knowledge, skills, and experience.

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Good teachers thoughout history have placed strong emphasis on helping students see meaning in their educational experience. They have motivated students by relating knowledge to the practical realities of daily life, and have encouraged students to learn through hands-on practical experience.

Dale Parnell
Contextual Teaching Works, 2001

As discussed under Goal 1, high schools in Washington are developing the career planning skills of high school students and transforming the ways they prepare students for life after high school. As part of these changes, high schools are creating new "hands-on" opportunities for students to learn, including contextual, applied, and work-based learning experiences.

Alternative programs are an option for students who drop out before obtaining a high school diploma. Alternative programs can employ learning practices like those now starting in high school to reengage young people in learning. Under WIA, local workforce development councils have established youth councils that are applying their resources to prevent dropouts and reengage students in learning. Youth councils can support the creation of partnerships between school districts, the employer community, and nonprofit community-based organizations to develop broad-based strategies to assist youth to be successful in and beyond high school.

To prevent duplication and increase efficiency, high schools and alternative programs should coordinate efforts to ensure all students achieve either a high school diploma or entry into a postsecondary education or training program. Efficiencies can be obtained, for example, by coordinating their work with employers to develop work-based learning opportunities and to market promising careers. Local workforce development councils can work with their local K-12 system, their WorkSource operators, and their contractors for youth services to ensure resources are maximized.

As a competency-based system of assessment emerges to replace seat-time, the K-12 system will need to revisit how success is measured for all students.

For special education students who exit high school without a high school diploma, high schools need to ensure these students achieve the necessary core skills to gain entry into employment or postsecondary education and training.

The 2001 Legislature, authorized ESB 6456, the Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission, "to set performance improvement goals for certain disaggregated groups of students and dropout goals." Increasing high school graduation rates requires a wide range of measures including preventative measures to assist students as early as possible. While the issue belongs to all of K-12 education the workforce development programs can also play a significant role.

Finally, it must be stressed that a high school diploma alone does not generally enable an individual to obtain a family-wage job. Most family-wage jobs require significant postsecondary training. In developing strategies to enable disadvantaged people to achieve self-sufficiency, we must not lose sight of this basic fact.

3.1.2 *Expand summer programs to address the education and employment needs of "at risk" students.*

Lead Organizations: Employment Security Department and Workforce Development Councils (Youth Councils).

Partners: Department of Social and Health Services (Economic Services), Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Customers: Students and Businesses.

Another strategy to increase student engagement in learning is summer employment and training. WIA promotes "summer employment opportunities that are directly linked to academic and occupational learning." Many high schools and alternative programs are already working with employers to create work-based learning opportunities and to market promising careers. Workforce development councils, in partnership with school districts, are engaging employers in providing summer employment opportunities for high school students.

Many students who would benefit from such programs cannot participate because their district does not offer such a program, or because the program capacity is insufficient to meet demand.

Objective 3.2 ▶ Assist unemployed individuals to gain and retain employment.

Strategies

3.2.1 *Develop a more effective labor exchange to help individuals get jobs with the greatest potential for wage progression.*

Lead Organizations: Employment Security Department and Workforce Development Councils.

Partners: WorkSource Partner Programs.

Customers: Job Seekers and Businesses.

Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council Partnership Initiatives

The King County Work Training Program offered a six week summer component of the Stay in School Program titled "Earn and Learn." Ten projects that integrated employment and education were created through partnerships with school districts, municipalities, community-based agencies, and private sector employers maximizing use of resources. Youth earned high school credits, as well as jobs skills and salaries. One hundred forty-six students, at risk of dropping out of high school, participated in the program in 2001.

Seattle Youth Employment program enabled 151 low-income youth or youth at risk of dropping out to obtain a half credit towards high school graduation in language arts, math, or science while employed during the summer. For example, youth participating in a young entrepreneurs program at the Tigray Community Association Center built a fund-raising plan for a nonprofit business and earned math credit.

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A first step for increasing the earnings of disadvantaged individuals is to help them gain and retain employment. Public employment services, offered through the WorkSource system, must become more desirable and accessible to employers and job seekers. WorkSource must become a place that employers turn to find job applicants.

Mandatory employment services programs that tailor services to the needs of individual recipients—so-called "mix strategy" programs that require some participants to begin by looking for work and others to start with education and training—prove more effective than more rigid approaches that simply assign all participants to either a job-search-only program or an education and training-only program with little regard to their individual needs.

Gordan L. Berlin
Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, 2002

Gaining and retaining employment are often a difficult first step for individuals at the bottom of the labor market. They may have problems coping with the balance of family and work—their work is often sacrificed if a domestic crisis arises. They may need help with transportation and child care. They may lack basic literacy and life management skills. They often experience substance abuse, trauma, domestic abuse, or homelessness. A key step has been the creation of *GoToWorkSource.com* as the virtual site of the public labor exchange and connections to support services.

3.2.2 *Sustain and expand programs with demonstrated success in enabling low-income individuals to achieve wage progression.*

Lead Organization: The Office of the Governor.

Partners: Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Department of Social and Health Services (Economic Services), Employment Security Department, Workforce Development Councils, and Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Customers: Low-Income Individuals.

Under our state's WorkFirst program, there are many strategies in place to assist disadvantaged parents to gain and retain employment. Support services are provided to facilitate employment, including child care, transportation, and other employment-related costs. The Community Jobs program arranges for jobs in government and community-based organizations and assists individuals in combining training with their employment. The Preemployment Training Program provides short-term, customized training for specific employers. The WorkFirst Postemployment Labor Exchange program assists with job retention and progression through career guidance, referrals, and other services over the telephone. The Limited English Proficiency Pathway blends English-as-a-Second-Language instruction with job search assistance, work, or work-like activities, and includes training for wage progression. Finally, Washington has been the most successful state in the nation in increasing the number of low-income workers claiming the federal Earned Income Tax Credit, which enables many low-income workers to have income above the poverty level, thus increasing their incentive to gain and retain employment.

3.2.3 *Expand access to support services such as child care, especially for target populations.*

Lead Organizations: Department of Social and Health Services (Economic Services and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation) and Workforce Development Councils.

Partners: Employment Security Department and State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Customers: Low-Income Individuals, including target populations.

Gaining and retaining employment can be a difficult first step for entry-level workers or those with minimal skills or work experience. Individualized services can assist overcoming the challenges of child care, transportation, basic literacy, limited English language proficiency or a lack of life management skills. Those with disabilities or those who experience substance abuse, domestic abuse, or homelessness have compounded problems.

3.2.4 *Strengthen postemployment services for customers.*

Lead Organization: Employment Security Department.

Partners: Workforce Development Councils, Business and Labor Organizations, and WorkSource Partner Programs.

Customers: Low-Income Workers.

Postemployment services assist individuals to retain their jobs and increase their earning potential. In particular, new employees who are immigrants or without substantial employment history can benefit from a variety of postemployment support strategies. For example, counseling may help to overcome conflicts that arise due to misunderstandings in the workplace. In order to meet long-term career goals, individuals may need guidance to identify further training or to balance work and family obligations. Strong communication and coordination is often needed among employers, their new employees, and the public agencies assisting them.

OBJECTIVE 3.3 ▶ Remove barriers for populations with unique obstacles to employment and increase the number of employers who hire individuals with disabilities, women, and people of color in high-wage, high-demand occupations.

Washington's population growth is slowing. Even with continued immigration from other states and countries, laborforce growth slowed to 20 percent during the 1990s. Forecasts suggest growth in the next decade will slow to 14 percent and from 2010 to 2020 to only 8 percent. This presents Washingtonians with an opportunity and a challenge. This once in a lifetime opportunity means well paying jobs will be available to a wider spectrum of people than in the past. The challenge is many of the populations that have been underused in the past, continue to face unique barriers to gaining and retaining employment.

There are programs currently targeted to these special populations. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department of Services for the Blind provide a full range of vocational services, including assessing vocational interests and abilities, referrals for job training, physical and mental restoration services, and conducting follow up services to people with significant disabilities. WorkFirst's services to TANF recipients include the Limited English Proficiency Pathway that blends English-as-a-Second-Language instruction, job search, job retention assistance, and also assists TANF recipients to access training that leads to wage progression.

With large numbers of baby boomers retiring, we must pay more attention to those who are currently not in the laborforce in great numbers, including the disabled community, people of color, and single-parent families. We will need to diffuse the barriers unique to each population, ***and*** offer culturally specific services. We will also need more research to identify more accurately the subpopulations that get stuck at the bottom of the labor market and to test strategies to increase their employability.

Farm workers have particular needs that must be addressed. Among the approximately 170,000 migrant and seasonal farm workers, the median annual income is $5,000, and the median level of educational attainment is the 8th grade. In the first two years of operation the U. S. Department of Labor's *National Farm Worker Jobs Program* funded 800 migrant and seasonal farm workers in Washington to obtain job training, employability development assistance (including literacy development) and related assistance. We must continue to develop training programs that respond to the unique characteristics of the farm worker population, including the seasonal nature of their work.

Strategies

3.3.1 *Plan for and implement the Ticket to Work program.*

Lead Organizations: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Department of Services for the Blind.

Partners: Business and Labor Organizations, Employment Security Department, and WorkSource Partner Programs.

Customers: People With Disabilities.

Because Ticket to Work will assist many people with disabilities to take advantage of employment opportunities, it is important that workforce partners and service deliverers have a strong understanding of this program and inform customers of the options that will become available. Ticket to Work could provide a source of revenue for any WorkSource center or partner that becomes a "ticket-taker" and successfully enables customers receiving Social Security disability benefits to obtain employment. Workforce development partners will analyze the Ticket to Work program and how they might best use Ticket to Work to increase their capacity to serve people with disabilities.

3.3.2 *Educate employers, especially employers from high-wage, high-demand industries about the benefits of hiring individuals from target populations.*

Lead Organization: Employment Security Department.

Partners: WorkSource Partner Programs, Department of Services for the Blind, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Workforce Development Councils, Business Organization, Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development.

Customers: Businesses and Target Populations.

Several studies have shown employers are at least equally satisfied with employees with disabilities as with others. A study by the DuPont Corporation reported that at least 90 percent of the 3,000 employees with disabilities were rated average or above average in job performance. Positive marketing of skills and abilities could increase the number of employers who are willing to hire people from target populations. Employers associations could disseminate success stories for employing people with disabilities and people of color. At the same time, employers need to be made aware of the assistance available to them. Lead organizations and partners can provide employers with technical assistance to provide access-friendly worksites and reasonable accommodations.

Ticket to Work – Phase 2

Washington began implementing Health Care for Workers with Disabilities (HWD) in January 2002. *This is the first phase of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 that* enables states to eliminate barriers to employment for people with disabilities by improving access to health care coverage available under Medicare and Medicaid. HWD allows people with disabilities to work and to earn up to 450 percent of the federal poverty level and still continue their Medicaid coverage, eliminating one of the most significant barriers to employment.

The next phase of Ticket to Work begins in Washington in June 2003. The Social Security administration will send a *ticket* to every working age Social Security Insurance or Social Security Disability Insurance beneficiary (180,000 individuals) in Washington, that they can take to any approved service provider from the employment network and exchange for services leading to or supporting employment. If the services are successful in allowing the ticket holder to work and earn to the point they are no longer drawing a monetary benefit from Social Security, then the ticket taker is paid up to 40 percent of what that monetary benefit would have been for up to 5 years. While there are alternate payment schemes and other complexities, the workforce development system can provide funding and incentives to improve the effectiveness of these services.

It has become a business imperative to ensure that racial and ethnic minorities and people with disabilities gain the skills needed to operate in the workforce and in shortage industries such as health care. This has to be part of the solution to alleviating the shortages.

Troy Hutson
Washington State Hospital Association, 2001

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3.3.3. *Develop accountability and program improvement mechanisms for increasing employment and earnings for target populations.*

Lead Organization: Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Partners: Department of Services for the Blind, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Employment Security Department, and Workforce Development Councils, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development.

Customers: Target Populations.

People with disabilities and people of color have lower educational and/or workforce outcomes than that of the general population. Women tend to enroll in educational and training programs for low-wage occupations. In 2000, about 55 percent of African American secondary career and technical education program completers went on to employment or further education compared to 77 percent of their white counterparts. Fifty-nine percent of people with disabilities who completed postsecondary career and technical programs became employed during the third quarter after completion compared to seventy-six percent for other students. Comprehensive data helps to formulate workforce development policy, but this must be complemented by accountability and improvement mechanisms.

Agencies should:

- Develop mechanisms for the collection and analysis of data on the use of workforce system services by target populations and for target population memberships on local workforce development councils.
- Conduct coordinated research examining the variation in wage progression among target populations, and identify variables that account for success or failure.
- Support and use programs and best practices that have demonstrated successful outcomes for target populations.
- Develop and maintain performance measures that encourage access to services and beneficial outcomes for target populations.

OBJECTIVE 3.4 ▶ Assist low-income individuals to move up a career ladder by increasing training and developing career opportunities.

Strategies

3.4.1 *Expand customized training, apprenticeship preparation and apprenticeship programs, and other training opportunities for low-income individuals.*

Lead Organizations: State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Employment Security Department, and Washington State

Apprenticeship and Training Council at the Department of Labor and Industries.

Partners: Joint Apprenticeship Committees, Workforce Development Councils, Department of Social and Health Services (Economic Services), Private Career Schools, Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development, and Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Customers: Low-Income Individuals.

Programs and strategies that enable economically disadvantaged people to gain and retain employment are a necessary step toward wage progression. Wage progression normally occurs for individuals who stay continuously employed. This is particularly true for individuals in their 20s and 30s.

But, in order to get increases in wages and earnings beyond the level achieved normally by low-income workers who stay employed, occupational skills training is necessary. As concluded by Gary Burtless of the Brookings Institution, training in occupational skills is the only program strategy that has been proven to have a positive net impact on wage progression. Not that career and technical skills training always works—it doesn't. Occupational skills training, however, is the only strategy that does work.

WTECB's own research supports this conclusion. Our 1997 net impact evaluation of the Job Training Partnership Act program for disadvantaged adults found that employment services, without occupational skills training, were successful in increasing the number of people employed. The employment, however, was in jobs with lower hourly wages and earnings than the jobs held by a comparison group of similar individuals who were not in the program. In contrast, program participants who received occupational skills training at a community or technical college experienced wage and earnings gains substantially above their comparison group of similar individuals. This finding does not say that occupational skills training is the right strategy for all disadvantaged people. Not all economically disadvantaged people are in a position that allows for success in a training program due to substance abuse, very limited basic skills, or other extreme barriers. This finding points out, rather, the importance of enabling individuals who can succeed in occupational skills training to have access to it.

An important distinction lies in the term "occupational skills training." The positive impacts that WTECB, Dr. Burtless, and others have found have been from programs in occupational skills training, not in programs offering basic or general education without occupational skills training. (The lumping together of research on the results of education and training programs may be one reason why there may be confusion as to the effectiveness of occupational skills training for low-income individuals.)

Only when basic skills instruction is coupled with occupational skills training does it generally have a positive impact on employment and earnings.

Placing low-income individuals into apprenticeship programs is one avenue for increasing occupational skills training for low-income individuals. Apprenticeship programs combine earning and learning and have built-in wage progression as an individual demonstrates achievement of a formal set of skill standards.

3.4.2 *Provide training programs at times and locations that are accessible to working people, and provide support services to assist in overcoming barriers to training.*

Lead Organization: State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Partners: Department of Social and Health Services (Economic Services), Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development, Employment Security Department, Office of Adult Literacy, and Workforce Development Councils.

Customers: Low-Income Workers.

We face a daunting challenge in providing real access to occupational skills training for the working poor. They are often people who have a difficult enough time working and taking care of a family at the same time without also going to school. We must make more training programs available at convenient hours and locations for working people. We must provide child care and other support services at times and places where parents are going to school. We must offer training using modular curricula and that is open-entry and open-exit so workers can receive training in "doable" doses.

3.4.3 *Increase basic skills instruction in the workplace, and integrate it into occupational skills training.*

Lead Organization: State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' Office of Adult Literacy.

Partners: Department of Social and Health Services (Economic Services), Employment Security Department, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and Workforce Development Councils.

Customers: Low-Income Workers and Students.

WTECB's 1997 net impact and cost-benefit evaluation calculated public investments and earnings over time for adults enrolled in basic skills education at community and technical colleges (these were adults who enrolled for work-related reasons and were not also enrolled in career and technical training). During the first three and a half years after leaving college, adult basic skills students experienced increased earnings, but these increases in participant benefits were less than the program costs to the

public. The findings indicate that basic skills education without occupational skills training is not cost effective for participants who want to improve their employment situations.

3.4.4 *Support the development of career ladders leading to high-wage, high-demand occupations.*

Lead Organizations: State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and Business Organizations.

Partners: Workforce Development Councils, Labor Organizations, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development, Skill Panels, and Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Customers: Low-Income Individuals and Students.

Career ladders are the steps by which entry-level workers can advance within a set of related and increasingly better paid occupations. For example, an individual could start as a certified nursing assistant, advance to a position as a licensed practical nurse, and then to a registered nurse. Each level involves additional responsibilities and earnings, but requires learning additional skills.

Local employers played a central in developing career ladders for the Job Ladder Partnership (Preemployment Training) at Shoreline Community College. The program helps students identify a career pathway within firms or collaborating firms, identifies the educational opportunities available, uses entry-level jobs as a pathway toward earning a family-wage occupation, offers training in shifts, and provides work-related adult basic education.

Skill panels, because they consist of key representatives of employers, labor and education and training providers in an industry or occupational cluster, are well positioned to identify the steps for a career ladder in their sector, and to help make sure all the steps are in place in their local area.

3.4.5 *Create and offer financial incentives to employers and low-income workers to increase training.*

Lead Organization: Office of the Governor.

Partners: Department of Social and Health Services (Economic Services), Employment Security Department, Workforce Development Councils, Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development, and Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Customers: Low-Income Workers and Businesses.

We must provide financial incentives to employers and employees for career and technical skills training so both can afford

In partnership with the local community colleges, we've devised career ladders that help entry-level workers identify and obtain the education and training they need to fill high-demand, high-wage occupations. Our employers are happy because they know they will finally be able to fill positions with qualified people, and the workers are happy because they are more satisfied knowing they are fulfilling their goals and will receive higher wages!

Jody Smith
Multicare Health Systems
Member of the Pierce County Health Services Council, 2001

it. Washington could consider incentives offered in other states such as tax credits, income support for time spent in training, and financial aid for part-time enrollment. In Ohio, welfare recipients who obtain entry-level hospitality jobs are eligible to participate in the Hospitality On-Site Training program. Each week participants receive 10 hours training work for 20 hours, and the program pays them for 30 hours work, enabling them to meet the work requirements of the state's welfare reform law. North Carolina's New and Expanding Training program includes a worker training tax credit to the company for new employees during training or existing employees training on new equipment. To be eligible, the company must pay above the average wage standard for the county of location, and extra credit is available in regions where jobs are most needed. The Focused Training program assists companies in training workers to use new technologies in targeted industries: manufacturing, information, and telecommunications.

Another incentive for encouraging low-income workers to obtain additional qualifications is to make short programs count towards a degree, diploma, or certificate. WorkFirst's Preemployment Training (PET) provides 12 week programs customized for specific employers. When students complete a PET program, some community and technical colleges give students a certificate and grant credit towards advanced qualifications.

Challenge Four: Facilitate the Integration of Workforce Development Programs

Goal 4: *Integrate workforce development programs to improve customer service.*

Key Performance Measures

1. The percentage of total employers using WorkSource: 7 percent of Washington employers used WorkSource during the first year, not counting electronic services (first time measure).

2. The percentage of total workers using WorkSource (this measure will be reported separately for women, people of color, and people with disabilities, as well as for the participant population as a whole): 10 percent of Washington workers used WorkSource during the first year, not counting electronic services (first time measure).

3. WorkSource customer perception of seamlessness as evidenced by survey responses (this measure will be reported separately for women, people of color, and people with disabilities, as well as for the participant population as a whole). (Data not yet available.)

The Issue for Goal 4

There are 17 different programs in the workforce development system and 23 other related programs. Each program

was created to fulfill certain purposes for certain populations of customers. In most cases, these purposes and eligible populations are specified by state or federal statute. Rules established by agencies provide greater specificity to guide staff in carrying out the programs. Although these program designs may make sense in and of themselves, when viewed in combination, they have resulted in a dizzying array of government services for the customers they are intended to serve. In order to effectively meet the challenges set forth by the Governor, we must continue our work to remove or transcend these barriers.

As discussed earlier, WorkSource is Washington's one-stop system removing service delivery barriers in the workforce development. Since July 2000, WorkSource Centers have been operating in each of the 12 local workforce development areas of the state. There are 25 WorkSource centers and 38 affiliate sites that offer access to at least 17 different workforce development and related programs. Workforce development councils select and oversee WorkSource center operations at the local level. In addition, customers are able to "serve themselves" via Internet-based services. Customers coming to WorkSource, either in person or electronically, find a menu of employment and training options from which to choose the right path for them. While these options are still funded by separate program streams, the customers should not be aware of this; the different services should be accessible as though they were funded from a single source. That is the goal—to make the walls between categorical programs invisible to the customers.

While WorkSource is in place, we still have a long way to go. We must knock down categorical thinking. We must think of the workforce development programs as a system and act as if they were a system. We must face up to hard decisions regarding shared resources and shared accountability for results. One of the most crucial challenges facing the system is to successfully mobilize the resources needed to provide reasonable accommodations for customers with disabilities and grant this population the same opportunities to take advantage of services as other populations. If we are to meet the challenges presented by the skills gap, transitions for incumbent and dislocated workers, and wage progression for low-income individuals, we must move beyond programmatic approaches. We must break down the walls of categorical programs so customers receive the best possible service.

WorkSource partners include local programs administered by three state agencies: DSHS, ESD, and SBCTC. The table on page 51 shows WorkSource partners required by the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and WorkSource partners required by the state.

OBJECTIVE 4.1 ⊳ Improve WorkSource services to customers, including target populations by bringing together individual partner programs to craft comprehensive solutions.

WorkSource Partner Programs

WorkSource partners required by the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998

- Workforce Investment Act Title 1B Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker Programs
- Public Exchange Services funded under the Wagner-Peyser Act
- Veterans' Workforce Programs
- Welfare-to-Work Programs
- Trade Adjustment Assistance and North American Free Trade Agreement Programs
- Local Veterans' Employment Representatives/DVOP
- State Unemployment Compensation Programs
- Workforce Investment Act Title II Adult Education and Literacy Programs including English-as-a Second language programs, Vocational Education Programs funded under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act
- Secondary Vocational Education programs funded under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act
- Senior Community Service Employment Program funded under Title V of the Older Americans Act
- Vocational Rehabilitation programs authorized under parts A and B of Title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act)

WorkSource Partners Required by the State

- Claimant Placement Program
- Postsecondary Career and Technical Programs
- Worker Retraining Program
- WorkFirst
- English-as-a-Second-Language Programs

Other Programs Encouraged to Be Part of the WorkSource System

- Literacy Programs
- Apprenticeship Programs
- Local School to Work Connections
- Americorps/Washington State Service Corps
- Tech-Prep Consortium
- Private Career and Technical Schools
- Other Programs identified by the WorkSource Regional Partnerships

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Strategies

4.1.1 *Understand and respond to the needs of business customers, and implement a coordinated, comprehensive strategy among WorkSource partners.*

Lead organization: Employment Security Department.

Partners: Business Organizations, WorkSource Partner Programs, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, and Workforce Development Councils.

Customers: Businesses.

Improving WorkSource services for job seekers is only half of the story; WorkSource must also improve its services to the business community to get access to good jobs and assist economic development. Many programs are engaging employers in workforce development, but too often these efforts are disconnected and programs compete for employer attention. Overloading employers with offers of information and assistance from different sources can deter participation. A coordinated approach helps employers get assistance from the public sector, not only to find workers, but for a variety of other services.

The WorkSource system can provide labor market information, prevailing wage rates for specific occupations and geographic regions, computer job matching, assistance with recruitment such as screening services and job training, among many other services for employers.

4.1.2 *Improve customer service by collecting and using customer feedback, providing electronic services, and sharing information on customer service best practices.*

Lead Organization: Employment Security Department.

Partners: WorkSource Partner Programs, Business and Labor Organizations, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, and Workforce Development Councils.

Best Practice

Private / Public Partnerships

Businesses are the primary customers of **Grays Harbor Employers' Assistance Project (EAP)** operated by Grays Harbor Chamber of Commerce. The program is mutually beneficial for businesses and the job seekers who have been prepared for work by 17 partner organizations. EAP determines the job openings and qualifications needed by its registered businesses, conducts a web-based match from more than 1,000 individuals in the EAP database, qualifies the match, and provides employers with a selection of qualified applicants. Located at the Grays Harbor WorkSource Center, project staff maintains relationships with both the employer and the new worker after placement. Since April 2000, the project has served more than 225 businesses, more than 600 individuals have been hired in full-time positions, and their retention rate is over 80 percent.

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We are taking customer service very seriously. We have implemented a statewide program to train all 2,742 Employment Security staff in customer service so they can better understand their customers' needs—those of the job seekers, as well as the employers seeking workers. Many of our workforce development council partners and staff have also asked to be included in this training effort.

Sylvia Mundy
Employment Security Commissioner, 2002

Customers: Job Seekers and Employers.

WorkSource centers around the state have developed methods of assessing customer satisfaction. For example, many centers ask customers to complete customer satisfaction cards. ESD has recently started a mystery shopper program to assess customer service. These efforts will be expanded, including the use of mystery shoppers from targeted populations. Assessments will identify best practices in adapting programs and procedures to improve customer service; these best practices will be shared and recognized throughout the WorkSource system.

One way to improve customer service delivery is to identify additional sites for customer core services access via the Internet. For those without access to the Internet at home, WorkSource partners will identify additional public spaces that offer can Internet access. Possible venues include libraries, community and technical colleges, and community centers,

The *Connecting the Dots for Economic Vitality: Workforce Strategies 2001 Conference* hosted by WTECB in Walla Walla provided an opportunity for public, private, state, and local leaders in business, labor and education to exchange information, develop relationships and examine innovative local and national policies. The conference also provided an opportunity to recognize three best practices: Pierce County Careers Consortium, WorkSource Walla Walla's Proficiency Testing Center, and the Grays Harbor Employers' Assistance Project. Recognition ceremonies, conferences, partner visits, and workshops will provide forums for promoting best practices in customer services.

4.1.3 *Include all WorkSource partners in customer service training, including training in serving target populations.*

Lead Organization: Employment Security Department.

Partners: Workforce Development Councils, Business and Labor Organizations, and WorkSource Partner Programs.

Customers: Job Seekers and Employers.

In order to provide the best possible customer service, WorkSource staff must be well trained to customize services to meet individual needs and well informed about the services provided by partner programs. For job seekers, staff must be able to ascertain their current abilities and needs and the steps necessary to meet their short- and long-term goals. Staff must be trained in best practices for serving job seekers and employers. To meet this objective, ESD and WorkSource partners have implemented a statewide customer service training policy.

Customer service training includes awareness and diversity training. WorkSource staff will be informed about specialized services for meeting the needs of target populations. Such

services include informing women about high-wage job opportunities, including nontraditional employment; services that help displaced homemakers overcome the barriers they commonly face; and services that are accessible to customers of limited English proficiency. Staff need to recognize customers with "invisible" disabilities such as learning disabilities and be trained in the best methods for meeting their needs.

Customers and training providers from target populations will be well represented among those developing training models and delivering training. The training will capitalize on available capacity and expertise. By taking these steps, WorkSource centers will help to ensure workforce development services are provided in a welcoming and accessible manner.

OBJECTIVE 4.2 ▶ Develop and maintain service delivery capacity that is flexible and responsive.

Strategies

4.2.1 *Provide a statewide information system for case management that is shared by WorkSource partners.*

Lead organization: Employment Security Department.

Partners: Workforce Development Councils, WorkSource Partner Programs, and Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Customers: Job Seekers and Employers.

In the past, WorkSource partners kept separate management information systems even though they provide related services to the same customers. The Service, Knowledge and Information Exchange System (SKIES) is a shared database that allows WorkSource partners to access the same management and customer information to provide more efficient, coordinated services, while respecting customer confidentiality. With the implementation of SKIES any WorkSource partner agency can access the same customer file with fully updated information thus removing the burden and costs of redundant forms from the customer and enhancing our capacity to meet customer needs.

4.2.2 *Develop systems to track, and report core WorkSource services.*

Lead Organizations: Employment Security Department, Workforce Development Councils, and Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Partners: WorkSource Partner Programs.

Customers: Job Seekers and Employers.

While SKIES tracks WorkSource participants who register for program service, many services do not require "registration." Job seekers and employers who visit resource rooms, browse the website, http:www.gotoworksource.com,, or access other services that do not involve significant staff assistance do not have to register. WorkSource centers are beginning to develop mechanisms to

track participants who use only such services. In order to meet customer needs and to adjust services to meet changing needs, service providers must know how many people are using these services. This data will be important for analyzing the services accessed by target populations; they will also assist the WorkSource system to report on its full contribution to meeting employers, students, and job seeker needs.

4.2.3 *Find financial resources to sustain the WorkSource delivery system infrastructure.*

Lead Organization: Employment Security Department.

Partners: Business and Labor Organizations, Workforce Development Councils, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, and WorkSource Partner Programs.

Customers: Employers and Job Seekers.

The Department of Labor provided start-up funding for the development of Washington's one-stop system. Additional development funding has been provided through the Governor's state set-aside funding through WIA. No funding mechanism, however, has been identified to sustain WorkSource infrastructure such as equipment and facilities. WorkSource partners will work together to identify appropriate resources to sustain the necessary infrastructure and will advocate for federal commitment to this streamlining initiative.

OBJECTIVE 4.3 ▶ Reach out to individuals from target populations in order to increase their use of WorkSource services, and provide services that meet their unique needs.

Strategies

4.3.1 *Provide individuals with disabilities with equal opportunities to benefit from WorkSource services.*

Lead Organization: Employment Security Department.

Partners: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Services for the Blind, WorkSource Partner Programs, Workforce Development Councils, and the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Customers: Job Seekers and Employers.

There are three areas where WorkSource Centers can develop and implement procedures and procure equipment that will provide people with disabilities more efficient and accessible services: information technology; communication systems; and barrier free physical environments.

The federal government has established accessibility standards for the development and procurement of information technology that can help WorkSource centers provide individuals with disabilities the same level of access to these resources as provided to others

seeking these services. Software that reads screen content out loud and hardware that replaces a standard keyboard or mouse are examples of technologies that can increase accessibility. The effectiveness and usefulness of these adaptive technologies may be significantly limited when accessibility is not planned for during development and procurement of information systems or resources. The result is increased costs for individualized accommodations and an inability to deliver services in the most effective and accessible manner.

WorkSource centers and affiliate sites must also develop a comprehensive plan to ensure the effectiveness and accessibility of oral communication and written materials. This includes, for example, policies and procedures for providing sign language interpreters, production of materials in alternate formats such as Braille or audio tape, use of human readers, and alternative ways of presenting oral or written information to meet the unique needs of individuals with disabilities.

Providing barrier-free physical environments is the third component necessary to ensure people with disabilities have the same opportunities to benefit from WorkSource services as others. People with disabilities should be able to move without obstruction through WorkSource and partner facilities. Facilities include any portion of buildings, structures, sites, complexes, equipment, roads, walks, passageways, and constructs such as computer kiosks and office cubicles.

Increased accessibility of information, communication, and physical environments at WorkSource centers will significantly reduce, but cannot entirely eliminate, the need for individualized accommodations in order for some people with disabilities to effectively participate in services. Many WorkSource centers do not have policies, procedures, or identified resources to provide individualized accommodations. This poses a significant barrier to many people with disabilities who might otherwise be able to access services. This strategy includes consideration of training for staff in identifying when and how they should provide reasonable accommodations.

Principles for Providing People With Disabilities Equal Opportunities at WorkSource

1. Provide individuals with disabilities equal access to information technology and data.

2. Provide oral and written communication systems that are effective in meeting the unique needs of individuals with disabilities.

3. Provide and maintain a barrier-free physical environment for individuals with disabilities.

4. Routinely consider and provide reasonable accommodations that are responsive to the unique needs of individuals with disabilities.

The President and I are committed to expanding career opportunities in this country for people with disabilities. I have been very impressed with the work the people of Washington have been doing in the One-Stop Career Center system.

Elaine L. Chao
U.S. Secretary of Labor
May 2002

The Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council is conducting a survey examining services to people with disabilities at WorkSource sites in the area. The $100,000 study is analyzing internal and external physical barriers, equipment, staff needs, and policies related to serving customers with disabilities. Preliminary findings indicate additional resources will be needed to ensure the WorkSource system provides individuals with disabilities with equal opportunities to benefit from WorkSource services.

In May 2002, the Department of Labor awarded a competitive work incentive program grant of $1 million to the Workforce Development Executives of Washington to expand training services and employment opportunities for people with disabilities for a period of 30 months. The project, called the Washington Employment Leadership Coalition on Meeting Expectations is a statewide effort that will provide training, technical assistance, and enhanced service delivery throughout WorkSource.

4.3.2 *Increase outreach, recruitment, and marketing activities conducted in partnership with tribes and community-based organizations serving targeted populations.*

Lead organization: Employment Security Department.

Partners: Department of Services for the Blind, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, WorkSource Partner Programs, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, Workforce Development Councils, and Community-Based Organizations.

Customers: Job Seekers and Employers.

Racial and ethnic minorities and people with disabilities may be unwilling to use WorkSource services if members of their community have not established a habit of using these services. The first step to ensure these communities use services is to make sure the WorkSource environment is welcoming and fully accessible. If individuals believe they will not be able to communicate with staff due to language barriers, or will not be provided with reasonable accommodations, they will not use the services, but we need to engage these target populations in order to meet employer needs. WorkSource partners must work to establish trust among communities and tribes and provide a quality of service that is deserving of their trust.

Community-based organizations and tribes are often in the best position to bring certain communities into contact with the WorkSource system. To complement recruitment and outreach efforts WorkSource partners will develop and conduct marketing campaigns to help ensure individuals with disabilities and people of color are aware of and participate in workforce development services.

4.3.3 *Encourage diversity among the membership of local workforce development councils and WorkSource staff to reflect the diversity of the community being served.*

Lead Organizations: Employment Security Department, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, and Workforce Development Councils.

Partners Organizations: WorkSource Partner Programs.

Customers: Employers and Job Seekers.

Local elected officials are responsible for appointing members of local workforce development councils. Current council members and their staff assist in the recruitment of new members. For many positions, the appointments must be made from among nominations provided by local organizations such as business, labor, and education organizations. A diverse staff can assist recruitment of target populations into workforce development services because people from target populations are likely to understand the unique needs of their own communities. Diversity among workforce development councils and WorkSource staff provide both insight for other staff on serving target populations and a frontline example for diverse hiring and appointment practices.

OBJECTIVE 4.4 ▶ Facilitate the integration of workforce development programs that serve youth.

Strategies

4.4.1 *Facilitate the transfer of information among workforce development programs serving youth.*

Lead Organizations: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and Workforce Development Councils (Youth Councils).

Partners: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Employment Security Department, Higher Education Coordinating Board, State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, and Workforce Development Councils.

Customers: Youth.

Programs serving youth collect a variety of information about customers. Sometimes the information collected is redundant because the information is not shared among programs. Programs for youth will address confidentiality restrictions so partners can share basic information. In addition, partners serving youth will develop common assessment tools so customers are freed from redundant assessments.

Another aspect of information sharing will be to develop a better understanding of how state and local agency programs (for youth education and preparation for work) interrelate. This will reduce duplication and leverage resources to aid in meeting shared goals. A starting point will be to develop and implement cross-program training for staff of organizations serving youth. Another valuable step will be the creation of an informational matrix that contains the advantages, requirements, and regulations for Running Start, tech-prep, apprenticeship, and other programs.

Endnotes

[1] RCW 28C.18.060 requires WTECB to update the state strategic plan for workforce development every two years. Representatives from business, labor, education, related public agencies, and private organizations served on six work groups to advise on this update.

[2] Section 203 of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 Health Care Financing Administration, http://www.hcfa.gov/medicaid/twwiia/twwiiahp.htm. Washington received two grants from the Social Security Administration(SSA): an infrastructure grant to help implement HWD (administered by the Washington State Department of Heath and Social Services), and a grant to conduct SSA Benefit Planning and Outreach activities to assist Social Security disability beneficiaries in understanding how going to work would affect their benefits (administered by the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment).

[3] Target populations include people with disabilities, people of color, and women, groups that have traditionally been underrepresented in high-skill, high-wage jobs.

[4] The federal poverty level has come under increasing criticism as being an inadequate measure of income required for a decent standard of living today. For an alternative approach see the *Northwest Job Gap: Searching for Work That Pays*, the Northwest Policy Center and the Northwest Federation of Community Centers, January 1999. Available at http://depts.washington.edu/npcbox/Region.pdf.

[5] Scott Cheney, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Center for Workforce Studies, *Keeping Competitive: A Report from a Survey of 18,000 Employers*, September 2001.

[6] WTECB Employer Survey 2001. Sixty-five percent of Washington employers hired new employees.

[7] John Bauer, James Hu, *Washington's Economy*, WTECB, January 2002.

[8] Based on current participation rates (the percentage of the age-specific population that enrolls in postsecondary training).

[9] Employment Security Department, *2000 Covered Employment and Payrolls in WA State by County and Industry*. This figure does not include wages for people who are self-employed.

[10] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Health Professions, *HRSA State Health Workforce Profiles: Washington*, Health Resources and Services Administration, National Center for Health Workforce Information and Analysis, Maryland, December 2000. Available online at http://www.bhpr.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/profiles/.

[11] University of Washington Center for Health Workforce Studies in conjunction with University of Washington School of Nursing and Washington State Hospitals Association, *2001 Washington State Hospital Workforce Survey: Nursing and Allied Health Staffing* (unpublished). Survey of 83 acute-care hospitals in Washington State. These figures account for part-time and full-time workers that equal 1,400 full-time equivalent positions. They do not take into account employed nurses who work in specialty and federal hospitals and approximately 40 percent of nurses who work in nonhospital settings. King and Pierce counties have the highest vacancy rates of over 10 percent and Spokane has the lowest vacancy rate of about 2 percent.

[12] Sue Skillman, University of Washington Center for Health Workforce Studies, seminar presenting preliminary findings of survey, October 3, 2001. Sixty-five percent of hospitals reported it was "very difficult" to find experienced registered nurses.

[13] John Bauer, James Hu, *Our Changing Labor Force*, WTECB, October 2002, 11. Washington had 662,000 people aged over 65 in 2000, representing 11 percent of the population. By 2020, Washington is projected to have 1.2 million people over the age of 65, and this would represent 16 percent of the population.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid. "High tech" includes biotechnology, computers and computer equipments, computer programming, software and maintenance, electronics, precision equipment and instruments, telephone communications, research and testing.

[16] Workforce Development Providers are organizations that provide skill training or employment related services such as job search assistance to individuals and employers.

[17] Michael E. Porter and Debra van Opstal, *U. S. Competitiveness 2001: Strengths, Vulnerabilities and Long-term Policies*, Council on Competitiveness, 2001.

[18] Securing Key Industry Leadership for Learning Skills (SKILLS).

[19] Following the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Workforce Development Councils (WDCs) were established to cover 12 regions in the state. The WDCs are comprised of a majority of business representatives and include representatives of labor and education. They develop local strategic plans in line with the state plan and coordinate local workforce development activities. WDCs also oversee the local WorkSource system, collaborate in the development of WorkFirst service area plans, and identify quality improvements and expected levels of performance for programs. To assist with information sharing between local areas, the WDCs established the Washington Workforce Association (WWA). WWA can also function as a communication point for local areas to coordinate efforts with state and federal partners.

[20] Mathematica Policy Research Inc, *The Final Report of the National Tech-Prep Evaluation*, Washington D.C., 1998, 7. Washington's Tech-Prep was established following the federal Tech-Prep Education Act of 1990 to provide incentives for students to continue in postsecondary education even if they do not intend to obtain a baccalaureate degree. Tech-prep programs coordinate two years of secondary career and technical education with two years of higher education at a community and technical college in a technical field–sometimes referred to as "2+2" or "2+2+2." Some colleges grant credit for students who obtain at least a B grade and pay a small fee. Also see Washington State Institute for Public Policy report, *Educational Opportunities in Washington's High Schools Under State Education Reform: High School Responses to Expectations for Change*, Volume 2, 50..

[21] Alan Hardcastle, *A Foundation for Economic Development*, Presentation to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, WSU Social and Economic Sciences Research Center, December 2001.

[22] RCW 28A.655.060(3)(c): "Upon achieving the certificate of mastery, schools shall provide students with the opportunity to pursue career and educational objectives through educational pathways that emphasize integration of academic and vocational education. Educational pathways may include, but are not limited to, programs such as work-based learning, school-to-work transition, tech-prep, vocational-technical education, running start, and preparation for technical college, community college, or university education." RCW 28A.230.090 provides that the Washington State Board of Education sets minimum high school graduation requirements. In 2001 the Board updated requirements to include a culminating project and an education plan. WAC 180-51-061: "Each student shall complete a culminating project for graduation. The project consists of the student demonstrating both their learning competencies and preparations related to learning goals three and four. Each district shall define the process to implement this graduation requirement, including assessment criteria, in written district policy." WAC 180-51-061: "Each student shall have an education plan for their high school experience, including what they expect to do the year following graduation." RCW 28A.150.210 Basic Education Act outlines the four goals (Goal 4 relates to educational pathways).

[23] The Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander populations are increasing especially rapidly. Students of color comprise 26 percent of the state's K-12 population, up from 12 percent in 1980. Similarly, the composition of the state's workforce is changing. Nonwhite workers are expected to account for a quarter of the net labor force growth in the state between 2000 and 2025. John Bauer, James Hu, *Our Changing Labor Force*, WTECB, October 2001.

[24] Ibid.

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[25] Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Board of Education, and the Washington State Human Rights Commission, *Joint Equity in Education Policy*, May 2000. This policy also directs school districts to use resources that allow students and parents with limited English proficiency to interact in their primary language with school staff where practicable and using the support of other interested community groups and organizations to accommodate language diversity in school.

[26] Peter Bylsma, Lisa Ireland, and Helen Malagon, *Educating Limited-English-Proficient Students in Washington State*, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, January 2002, 2, 14.

[27] Ibid., p. 2.

[28] Ibid., p. 1.

[29] Ibid., p. 16.

[30] Leslie Hendrikson, "Active Learning," *ERIC Digest*, No 17: http://www.ericae.net/edo/ED253468.htm, 1. Dale Parnell, *Contextual Teaching Works!: Increasing Student Achievement*, Cord, Texas, 2001.Dynarski, Mark et al., *Impacts of Dropout Prevention Programs*, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., 8014, June 1998. This study found that intensive alternative courses at the middle school level reduced the dropout rate.

[31] Barbara McLain and Madeleine Thompson, *Educational Opportunities in Washington's High Schools Under State Education Reform: High School Responses to Expectations for Change, Volume 2*, Washington State Institute for Public Policy, September 2001, 45, 46.

[32] Bettina Lankard Brown, *Mentoring and Work-Based Learning*, ERIC_NO: ED456332 Trends and Issues Alert No. 29, 2001.

[33] Youth who are eligible to participate in Workforce Investment Act youth programs form one definition of "at-risk" youth. According to Section 101. Definitions, the Workforce Investment Act, 1998: an "eligible youth" is an individual who (A) is not less than age 14 and not more than age 21; (B) is a low income individual; and (C) is an individual who is one or more of the following: (i) Deficient in basic literacy skills; (ii) a school dropout; (iii) homeless, a runaway, or a foster child; (iv) pregnant or a parent; (v) an offender; (vi) an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment.

[34] WTECB Employer Survey 2001.

[35] Dr. Paul Sommers and Deena Heg, *Matching Community and Technical College Professional/Technical Education Capacity to Employer Demand*, Northwest Policy Center, Institute for Public Policy and Management Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs, University of Washington, January 2000, i.

[36] Personal communication with Jim Crabbe and Doug Whittaker, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. IT full-time equivalent enrollment declined by 3 percent in the following year from fall 2000 to fall 2001.

[37] Washington Competitiveness Council Report, December 2001, 34. "...Of particular urgency is the need to address the shortage of top-quality Bachelors and Masters graduates, especially in science and engineering fields that support the state's strategic clusters."

[38] Loretta Seppenen, *The New Transfer Student: Students Completing Job Preparatory Programs with a Transfer Goal*, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, July 2001, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges: Board Meeting, January and February 2002. Transfers for place-bound students have been facilitated by the growth in branch campuses of the University of Washington and Washington State University and off-campus university centers of the regional four-year institutions. In 1990, 5 percent of all transfers were enrolled at branch campuses, while in 2000 15 percent were enrolled in branch or off campus centers.

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[39] Currently there are three types of statewide articulated agreements: The Direct Transfer Agreement Associate Degree and Associate of Science Degree Transfer #1 in Biological sciences, environmental/ resource sciences, chemistry, geology, and earth science and the Associate of Science Degree Transfer #2 in Engineering, computer science, physics, and atmospheric sciences. See SBCTC web site at http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/Board/Educ/transfer.htm.

[40] Gary Benson, *Background Information on the Articulation and Transfer Process*, Higher Education Coordinating Board presentation to the House Higher Education Committee, November 30, 2001. About 5,500 students complete the Associate of Arts degree per year. In the first year, 2000, 50 students obtained an Associate of Science degree. Through individual agreements about 250 students have career and technical credits recognized. About 6,000 students transfer without obtaining an associates degrees--the four-year institution evaluates each course separately.

[41] Loretta Seppenen, *Transfer with a Technical Degree*, SBCTC paper presented to the AACC conference April 2002, 2-3.

[42] Ronald Phipps, *Transfer of Credit from Nationally Accredited to Regionally Accredited Institutions*, Career Training Foundation, December 2001, and Personal communication with Gena Wikstrom, Executive Director, Washington Federation of Private Career Schools.

[43] The Inter-College Relations Commission (ICRC) is an affiliate commission of the Washington Council of High School and College Relations. It is a voluntary organization established in 1968 to facilitate transfer agreements between colleges. ICRC gathers representatives from colleges and universities twice a year to discuss transfer agreements. House Higher Education Committee Work Session on Transfer and Articulation, Washington State Legislature, November 30, 2001.

[44] Loretta Seppenen, *Transfer with a Technical Degree*, SBCTC paper presented to the AACC conference April 2002.

[45] Paul Sommers and Melissa Quall, Re-Inventing Information Technology Education, Report written for the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges by the Northwest Policy Center, Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs, Seattle, December 2001.

[46] According to a September 2001 General Accounting Office report, it will be necessary to first identify apprenticeable occupations in industries that have a shortage of skilled workers. General Accounting Office Report, *Registered Apprenticeships: Labor Could Do More to Expand to Other Occupations*, September 2001. GAO-01-940, 6.

[47] Professional Educator Standards Board Press Release, December 14, 2001. http://www.pesb.wa.gov/AlternativeRoutes/AlternativeRoutes.htm. The three alternative routes being piloted are: 1. for paraeducators or instructional aides with associate degrees seeking certification in special education or English-as-a-second language; 2. for classified staff with college degrees seeking certification in subject matter shortage areas or areas with shortages due to geographic location; and 3. for individuals with baccalaureate degrees who are not currently employed in a school district, or who hold emergency substitute certificates. Priority will be given to those who want to teach subjects where teachers are in short supply such as math and science or in areas of the state with shortages.

[48] Washington State Office of Financial Management and Washington State Employment Security Department, *2001 Long-Term Economic and Labor Force Forecast for Washington*, April 2001. Washington is second only to Florida and Texas in terms of growth in the proportion of workers age 45 and older. Frederica D. Kramer and Demetra Smith Nightingale, *Aging Baby Boomers in a New Workforce Development System*, The Urban Institute, Report Prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, January 2001.

[49] U.S. Committee of Economic Development, *New Opportunities for Older Workers*, Research and Policy Committee New York, New York, 1999, 99-045902, 13.

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[50] Division of Older Worker Programs, *The Nine "Best Practices" of Highly Effective SCSEP Projects* Employment and Training Administration, United States Department of Labor, August 2001.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Mark E. Van Buren, William Erskine, *The 2002 ASTD State of the Industry Report*, The American Society for Training and Development, Virginia, February 2002, 41.

[53] Personal Communication with Suzie Saxton, Program Training Coordinator, Yakima Valley, April 3, 2002.

[54] Eastern Washington Agriculture and Food Processing Partnership presentation to the Council of Presidents, November 2001.

[55] Census 2000 supplementary survey.

[56] John Bauer, James Hu, *Our Changing Labor Force*, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, October 2001. The Hispanic population in the state more than doubled during the last decade, reaching over 440,000 in 2000, 7.5 percent of the state population. While the Asian population increased by about 65 percent, the number of non-Hispanic whites grew by only 10 percent. Twenty-six percent of the state's public school students in grades K-12 are students of color; up from twelve percent in 1980. People of color and people with disabilities must be given more opportunities to attain improved education and workforce outcomes.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Edie Harding, with Mason Burleigh, Barbara McLain, and Madeleine Thompson, *Educational Opportunities in Washington's High Schools: Student Outcomes*, Volume 1, January 2001, 2, 26-29. The study tracked the progress of students entering ninth in 1995-1996 over four years and found that by the fourth year 24 percent of the class had dropped out or could not be located.

[60] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population in state by sex, detailed age, race, and Hispanic origin, 2000 Annual Averages, 2002.

[61] Northwest Workforce Development Council, Youth Training and Employment Program and Summer 2000 Performance Report, October 2000.

[62] Alternative programs include:
- Alternative learning experiences' where students are under a contract to complete individual plans based on achieving competencies.
- Alternative high schools that operate under the same fiscal conditions as other public high schools within a school district but employ alternative learning strategies.
- Alternative programs within high schools that provide alternative learning strategies.
- Academic and vocational education and training programs provided at community and technical colleges that lead to a high school program. School districts contract with community and technical colleges to provide these programs.

[63] Amendments to RCW 28A.655.030 and 1999 c 388 s 102 include the following: Sec. 1. 1 (a)... The goals may be established for all students, economically disadvantaged students, limited English proficient students, students with disabilities, and students from disproportionately academically underachieving racial and ethnic backgrounds. The commission may establish school and school district goals addressing high school graduation rates and dropout reduction goals for students in grades seven through twelve.

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[64] Youth who are eligible to participate in Workforce Investment Act youth programs form one definition of "at-risk" youth. According to Section 101. Definitions, the Workforce Investment Act, 1998: an "eligible youth" is an individual who (A) is not less than age 14 and not more than age 21; (B) is a low income individual; and (C) is an individual who is one or more of the following: (i) Deficient in basic literacy skills; (ii) a school dropout; (iii) homeless, a runaway, or a foster child; (iv) pregnant or a parent; (v) an offender; (vi) an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment.

[65] Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Section 129 (c).

[66] See WorkSource Partner Programs text box on page 52.

[67] Personal communication with Caroline Maillard, Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council, March 6, 2002.

[68] Personal communication with Suzie Saxton, Program Training Coordinator, Yakima Valley, April 4, 2002. The current average wage replacement rate for this program in 2001 was $9.09. The target population for this program is 80-85 per cent Hispanic.

[69] The Dupont Corporation, *Equal to the Task II*, 1990 report of employer survey results. "... the 1990 survey confirms that our employees with disabilities maintain their status as safe, productive and dependable workers." The International Center for the Disabled (ICD), The National Council on Disability, and the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, *ICD Survey II: Employing Disabled Americans*, 1987. A nationwide sample of 920 employers were surveyed and the results demonstrate an overwhelming majority of employers rated employees with disabilities as good or better than employees without disabilities in: overall job performance; willingness to work hard; reliability; attendance/punctuality and productivity. Eighty-four percent of line managers who had supervised employees with disabilities felt they were no harder to supervise. Now available from the Office of Disability Employment Policy, Department of Labor. The Job Accommodation Network (Office of Disability Employment Policy, conducts a cost benefits analysis of accommodations, last tabulated in 1999, http://www.jan.wvu.edu/media/Stats/BenCosts0799.html Employers reported benefits of providing accommodations for employees with disabilities: allowed hiring or retaining a qualified employee—56 percent; eliminated the cost of training a new employee—31 percent; saved worker's compensation and/or other insurance costs—38 percent; increased the worker's productivity—54 percent; other—25 percent (N= 867). Only 4 percent of employers reported no cost saving of providing accommodations while 46 percent reported saving between $7,501 and $50,000 and 20 percent reported saving between $20,001 and $50, 000.

[70] Section 203 of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999. Health Care Financing Administration, http://www.hcfa.gov/medicaid/twwiia/twwiiahp.htm.

[71] John Bauer, James Hu, *Our Changing Labor Force*, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, October 2001.

[72] National Governors' Association, *Working Out of Poverty: Helping Welfare Recipients Increase the Wages and Advance*, September 1999.

[73] Dr. Gerald Pumphrey, Bellingham Technical College, (former Vice President of Guildford Community College, North Carolina), presentation before the House Trade and Economic Development Committee of the Washington State Legislature, February 4, 2002.

[74] At a cost of $411 per hire, EAP is funded by Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council grants, Department of Labor grants, and contributions in kind from the Chamber of Commerce. This project received the Outstanding Rural Employment and Training Program award from the National Association of Workforce Boards, and it has been recognized by the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University as a One-Stop system innovation, received the Creative and Exemplary Welfare-to-Work Services award from the Employment Security Department, and Best Practice Public/Private Partnership from WTECB.

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[75] The Operations Team convened by the Employment Security Department, has drafted a formal agreement between the Employment Security Department, the Division of Vocational Services and the Division of Services for the Blind that outlines the responsibilities of each agency in serving individuals with disabilities through WorkSource.

[76] Employment Security Department, *WorkSource Core Services for Persons with Disabilities: Report to WorkSource Operations Committee*, January 2002.

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